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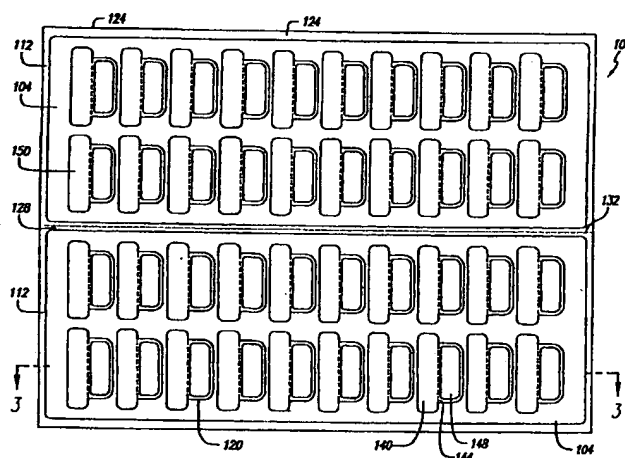
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(54) Title: SYSTEM FOR APPLYING LABELS



(57) Abstract: Facestock (308) is adhered with adhesive (312) to a liner sheet (304). Weakened separation lines (328) in the facestock define lines of facestock labels (332). And weakened separation lines (340) in the liner sheet define liner sheet strips (354) separable from the body of the liner sheet to expose backsides of respective lines of labels. The rest of the liner sheet can then be manipulated to position the line of labels on staggered tabs, the labels pressed into position and separated from the rest of the facestock. Another embodiment includes facestock sheet separation lines (120) defining the perimeters of facestock labels (140) with at least one facestock handle (148) attached thereto. The liner sheet (112) includes a portion (160) attached to the handle whereby the handle, the label and the portion are removable as a unit from the liner sheet and the facestock, the handle manipulated to position the label so that its adhesive backside is positioned and applied at the desired surface location, and the handle and portion then separated from the label.

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For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

AMENDED CLAIMS

[received by the International Bureau on 13 December 2001 (13.12.01);
new claims 126-154 added; remaining claims unchanged (6 pages)]

126. (New) A label applicator construction, comprising:
- a liner sheet;
 - facestock attached to the liner sheet;
 - the facestock including at least one weakened separation line defining at least a portion of perimeters of a facestock label and a facestock handle portion;
 - the facestock including at least one weakened facestock line separating the facestock handle portion from the facestock label;
 - the liner sheet including at least one weakened liner-sheet line defining at least a portion of a liner sheet patch on the handle portion, the patch positioned entirely on the side of the facestock handle portion of the at least one weakened facestock line;
 - the facestock label and the handle portion being removable from the liner sheet with the liner sheet patch on the handle portion and thereby exposing adhesive on a back surface of the facestock label; and
 - the handle portion being separable along the at least one weakened facestock line and as a unit with the liner sheet patch adhered to the handle portion, from the facestock label with the facestock label adhered with the adhesive in a desired position on an article.
127. (New) A label applicator construction, comprising:
- a liner sheet;
 - facestock attached with adhesive to the liner sheet;
 - at least one liner sheet weakened line through the liner sheet but not the facestock adjacent thereto;
 - at least one facestock weakened line through the facestock but not through the liner sheet;
 - the at least one facestock weakened line defining at least a portion of perimeters of facestock labels; and
 - the liner sheet weakened lines allowing separation of a portion of the liner sheet from another portion to thereby assist a user in positioning the facestock labels at desired locations on at least one surface and adhered thereto with the adhesive.
128. (New) The construction of claim 127 wherein the facestock sheet weakened lines allow separation of a portion of the facestock from another portion of the facestock.

129. (New) The construction of claim 128 wherein the at least one facestock weakened line defines at least a portion of a perimeter of a facestock handle portion adjacent to one of the facestock labels and is removable from the facestock as a unit and subsequently separable therefrom.

130. (New) The construction of claim 129 wherein the at least one liner sheet weakened line defines at least a portion of a perimeter of liner sheet handle portion attached to the facestock handle portion and forming part of the unit.

131. (New) The construction of claim 128 wherein the facestock labels before separation are aligned with one another, and the at least one liner sheet weakened line defines a liner sheet backing strip attached to backsides of the aligned facestock labels and removable therefrom to expose backsides of the facestock labels.

132. (New) The construction of claim 128 wherein the at least one liner sheet weakened line separates the liner sheet into a removable liner strip and a liner body portion, the removable liner strip when separated from the liner body portion exposes backsides of the facestock labels.

133. (New) The construction of claim 128 wherein the adhesive is a pressure sensitive adhesive, and the facestock is an ink and/or laser receptive topcoated facestock sheet which is laminated via the adhesive to the liner sheet.

134. (New) The construction of claim 128 wherein when the liner sheet portion is separated from the another liner sheet portion, the facestock labels are serially interconnected with breakable facestock thin connector strips.

135. (New) The construction of claim 128 wherein the at least one liner sheet weakened line defines a liner sheet portion attached to the facestock handle portion and forming part of the separable unit.

136. (New) The construction of claim 128 wherein the at least one facestock weakened line defines a facestock handle portion adjacent one of the facestock labels and separable therewith as a unit from the liner sheet.

137. (New) The construction of claim 136 wherein the at least one facestock weakened line defines a weakened separation line between the facestock handle portion and the adjacent facestock label and allowing separation of the facestock handle portion from the adjacent facestock label after the unit has been separated.

138. (New) The construction of claim 128 wherein the facestock labels have ink and/or toner receptive surfaces.

139. (New) The construction of claim 128 wherein each of the facestock labels has a rectangular shape with rounded corners.

140. (New) The construction of claim 128 wherein the facestock is a printable polyester film or Mylar.

141. (New) The construction of claim 128 wherein the facestock sheet weakened lines are die cut.

142. (New) A label applicator method, comprising:

providing a liner sheet having facestock attached thereto, the facestock including a facestock label and a facestock handle portion, the facestock including at least one weakened separation line defining at least a portion of perimeters of the facestock label and the facestock handle portion, the facestock further including at least one weakened facestock line separating the facestock handle portion from the facestock label, the liner sheet including at least one weakened liner-sheet line defining at least a portion of a liner sheet patch on the handle portion, the patch positioned entirely on the side of the facestock handle portion of the at least one weakened facestock line, the facestock label and the handle portion being removable from the liner sheet with the liner sheet patch on the handle portion and thereby exposing adhesive on a back surface of the facestock label, the handle portion being

separable along the at least one weakened facestock line and as a unit with the liner sheet patch adhered to the handle portion from the facestock label with the facestock label adhered with the adhesive in a desired position on an article.;

removing the facestock label and facestock handle portion as a unit from the liner sheet; and

after the removing, adhering the facestock label in a desired position on an article.

143. (New) The method of claim 142 wherein the facestock handle portion is releasably attached along a short end of the facestock label.

144. (New) The method of claim 142 wherein the facestock label defines a first facestock label, the facestock includes a second facestock label, and before the removing, passing the facestock and liner sheet through a printer and printing first indicia on the first facestock label and second indicia on the second facestock label.

145. (New) A label applicator method, comprising:

providing a liner sheet and facestock attached to the liner sheet, at least one liner sheet weakened line through the liner sheet but not the adjacent facestock, at least one facestock weakened line through the facestock but not through the liner sheet, the at least one facestock weakened line defining at least a portion of perimeters of facestock labels, the liner sheet weakened lines allowing separation of a portion of the liner sheet from another portion and the facestock sheet weakened lines allowing separation of a portion of the facestock sheet from another portion, thereby assisting a user in positioning the facestock labels at desired locations on at least one surface and adhered thereto with the adhesive, the facestock including a plurality of aligned facestock labels, and the liner sheet including a liner body portion and a liner strip;

separating the liner strip from the liner body portion from an attached position into a separated position wherein the facestock labels are connected to the liner body portion and backsides of the facestock labels are exposed;

manipulating at least one of the liner body portion and at least one surface relative to one other such that the exposed backsides of the aligned facestock labels are in a desired position relative to the at least one surface; and

with the aligned facestock labels in the desired position, applying the aligned facestock labels to the at least one surface, the applying including separating the aligned facestock labels from the liner body portion.

146. (New) The label applicator method of claim 145 wherein the portion of the liner sheet and the portion of the facestock label are adhered together when separated from the another portion of the liner sheet and the another portion of the facestock sheet.

147. (New) The label applicator method of claim 145 wherein the facestock labels are all positioned and adhered to the at least one surface at the same time.

148. (New) The label applicator method of claim 145 wherein with the liner strip in the separated position, top edges of each of the facestock labels are freestanding and unattached.

149. (New) The label applicator method of claim 145 wherein the applying includes manually pressing each of the facestock labels to the at least one surface, and the separating includes breaking ties attaching the facestock labels to adjacent portions of the facestock.

150. (New) The label applicator method of claim 145 wherein the at least one surface includes staggered tabs of file folders.

151. (New) The label applicator method of claim 145 wherein the applying includes manually pressing each of the facestock labels to the at least one surface, and the separating includes breaking ties attaching the facestock labels to adjacent portions of the facestock.

152. (New) The label applicator method of claim 145 wherein the plurality of aligned facestock labels defines a plurality of first aligned facestock labels aligned in a first line, the liner strip defines a first liner strip, the liner body portion defines a first liner body portion, the facestock includes a plurality of second aligned facestock labels aligned in a

second line spaced from and parallel to the first liner, the liner sheet includes a second liner strip disposed substantially between the aligned first and second lines of labels, and further comprising after the applying, removing the second liner strip and applying the second aligned facestock labels.

153. (New) The label applicator method of claim 145 further comprising before the applying steps, passing the facestock and liner sheet through a printer or copier and printing indicia on the first and second facestock labels.

154 (New) The label applicator method of claim 145 wherein the at least one surface includes staggered tabs of file folders and the applying includes manually pressing each of the facestock labels onto the staggered tabs of file folders, and the separating includes breaking ties attaching the facestock labels to adjacent portions of the facestock.

The sheet construction 100 is passed through a printer or a copier, such as shown in FIG. 26 at 170. And the desired indicia 164 are printed on the facestock label portion 140 of the unit 150. It is anticipated that all of the facestock labels 140 will be printed in a single pass through the printer 170. However, it is within the scope of the invention to
5 print less than all of them and then pass the sheet through a second, third, or more times to print on the remaining labels. Alternatively, the user can hand write on some or all of the labels 140.

After the label 140 has been printed, or handwritten thereon, with the desired indicia 164, the label unit 150 is pulled off the rest of the sheet, as shown in FIG. 4, by
10 the user grasping the liner sheet portion 160 and the handle portion 148 and removing them along their die cut lines from the surrounding liner sheet and facestock sheet and pulling the label portion 140 off of the underlying liner sheet with adhesive 108 remaining on the bottom portion of the label. The user then manipulates the label portion 140 into a desired position on the tab 174 by holding and manipulating the
15 facestock handle portion and the attached liner sheet portion, as shown in FIG. 5, between his thumb 178 and forefinger 182. The label 140 is then pressed down by the user and adhered with the adhesive 108 in the desired position on the tab 174. The handle portion with liner sheet portion attached thereto are separated from the printed adhered label by tearing along the perforation line or ties 144 as shown in FIG. 6.
20 Thereby the printed label 140 is accurately positioned by the user and without the user touching the label portion and thereby dirtying it or smudging it with body oils from the user's fingers or the user's fingers adhering to the adhesive.

FIGS. 7 through 12 illustrate a second label applicator construction of the present invention generally at 200. It is seen therein that it is conceptually similar to the
25 construction 100 in that removable label units 202 are defined by die cut lines 204, 206 in the facestock 208 and in the liner sheet 212, and adhesive 214 is provided between the sheets. However, instead of the facestock portion being formed by a large elongate rectangle defining the label with a smaller elongate rectangle parallel thereto along a side edge defining the handle portion, a different configuration is shown in construction FIG.
30 7. Although the unit 202 of FIG. 7 includes a similar elongate rectangular facestock label 216, facestock handle portions 220, 224 are formed at each end thereof and with perforation lines or ties 228, 232 between the ends of the facestock label and both of the handle portions. Similarly, liner sheet portions 236, 240 are die cut on the backs of each of the facestock handle portions 220, 224, respectively. The liner sheet portions 236,

240 have slightly smaller dimensions than the respective handle portions 220, 224, defining a thin facestock margin about the perimeter of the liner sheet portions.

After the sheet 200 has been passed through a printer or a copier and the desired indicia 250 printed on the labels 216, as shown in FIG. 10, the two end handle portions 220, 224 and liner sheet portions 236, 240 are grasped and pulled away from the sheet and the facestock label 216 peeled off from the liner sheet 212 with a layer of adhesive on the back of the label. With the two handle portions grasped by the user, the label unit 204 is positioned such that the label 216 is in the desired position on the tab 254 as shown in FIG. 11, and the label 216 is then pressed into position. The two handle portions 220, 224 are then pulled away along the perforation lines 228, 232 from the ends of the adhered label, as depicted in FIG. 12. Thereby, similar to the sheet 100, the facestock label 216 itself is never touched by the user.

Referring to FIGS. 13 through 19, a third label applicator construction sheet of the present invention is shown generally at 300. It is seen also to comprise a liner sheet 304 and a facestock 308 attached with adhesive 312 to the face of the liner sheet. Similar to the other constructions disclosed herein, margin edges 316 of the facestock have been cut and removed as well as a center gutter portion 320 and a perforation line 324 through the liner sheet and down the middle of the liner sheet as formed. The facestock has been die cut to form lines 328 of spaced rounded corner rectangular labels 332, each connected to adjacent labels with thin strips 336 and with the die cut line extending from the end labels to the edge of the facestock. The liner sheet 304 is die cut 340 with end lines extending all the way to but spaced a small distance to form a small break-away tie at the edge of the sheet. The die cut lines extend in a distance and then extend down, across and up, parallel to the outer shape of the adjacent label but spaced outwardly a slight distance therefrom and extending out to form a small plateau 350 between adjacent labels similar to the spacing on the facestock sheet between the adjacent labels. The label liner sheet portions 354 are adhered to respective ones of the facestock labels 332 while the sheet is intact and passed through the printer or copier.

After passing therethrough and with desired indicia 360 printed on the labels 332, the liner strip 364 at the top of the sheet is pulled away and separated from the remainder portion 370 of the sheet. The liner sheet portions mentioned above are removed with the liner sheet strip together with a liner sheet bar at the top 374. This step is shown in FIG. 16. The adhesive connection between the facestock and the liner sheet and the small ties at the end of the liner sheet cut lines, hold the sheet intact and prevent the liner strip 364

from separating before it is manually pulled away by the user after the printing. When it has been pulled away, the liner sheet portions 354 on the backs of the respective facestock labels 332 are removed thereby exposing the adhesive back sides of the line of labels 332 at the top of the remaining sheet portion 370. The top row of exposed labels
5 332 extends a slight distance out from the top edge of the sheet. The large remaining sheet portion 370 can then be manipulated by the user into the desired position aligned with the set of tab dividers 374 or file folders with their staggered tab 378. The body portion 370 provides a strong, not flexible or flimsy, handle for manipulating and accurately positioning the top row of exposed labels onto the desired positions on the
10 staggered tabs as shown in FIG. 17.

Each of the properly positioned labels 332 is then pressed flat down to form a strong adhesive bond onto the respective tabs 378 as depicted in FIG. 18. The body handle portion 370 of the sheet is then pulled away from the adhered labels 332, breaking the thin facestock ties between the adjacent labels and leaving the labels in
15 position. Referring back to FIG. 15, the next top liner strip is removed to expose the backsides of the second line of printed labels. The second line of printed labels are then manipulated into position on a second set of staggered dividers, the labels pressed into position and the remaining smaller body portion removed. This can be understood by again viewing FIGS. 17 through 19.

The fourth embodiment of FIG. 20, shown generally at 400, is an improvement over the embodiment of FIG. 13, and a number of small differences are apparent. It similarly includes facestock 404, liner sheet 408, adhesive, and cut lines to form labels 416, strips, etc. One of the differences is that there is an increased offset between the face and liner cuts. Also, there are more rounded corners, additional ties are provided on
20 the faces, additional ties are provided on the liners and additional rows of labels are provided. The face cuts are provided to relax the post-laser curl in laser printers.

Referring to FIG. 21, preferred dimensions in inches are: 430a (0.063), 430b (1.251), 430c (R0.125 typical), 430d (0.750), 430e (0.438 typical), 430f (0.219), 430g (0.547), 430h (1.656 typical), 430i (2.031 typical), 430j (0.824 typical (this half of sheet
30 only)), 430k (.006 first row .008 second, third row; .010 fourth row tie typical (this half of sheet only)), 430l (0.187 ref.), 430m (0.094 typical), 430n (0.010 tie typical both sides), 430o (0.006 tie typical both sides), 430p (4.025 typical), 430q (0.075), 430r (R0.109 typical), 430s (8.500 web width ref.), 430t (0.063 typical), 430u (0.010 tie

typical both ends), 430v (0.188 typical), 430w (0.188 typical), 430x (10.875) and 430y (11.000)

It can be seen that ten cavities are provided across by five around at 1.656 inches by .438 inch. Five ties per cavity as are provided on one-half of the sheet, and four ties
 5 per cavity on the other half of the sheet. The two surrounding cavities are 10.875 inches by 4.025 inches. The 1.5 mil polyester face is cut through to the 3.0 mil paper liner.

Referring to FIG. 22, preferred dimensions in inches are: 440a (1/8" cut x 1/32" tie), 440b (0.031), 440c (4.250), 440d (0.015 tie typical both ends each repeat), 440e (0.235 both ends), 440f (0.031 tie typical), 440g (0.366), 440h (0.015 tie typical both
 10 ends), 440i (0.015 tie typical), 440j (0.313 typical), 440k (0.625 typical), 440l (0.243 typical), 440m (1.250 typical), 440n (0.938 typical), 440o (0.133 typical), 440p (0.015 tie typical), 440q (0.375 typical), 440r (0.437 typical), 440s1 (1.500), 440s2 (0.750 typical), 440s3 (0.031), 440s4 (0.500), 440t (R0.125 typical), 440u (8.500 web width), 440v (R0.188 typical), 440w1 (0.531 typical), 440w2 (1.750 typical), 440w3 (2.031
 15 typical), 440x (10.938) and 440y (11.000 circumference)

Referring to FIGS. 23 through 30, a fifth label applicator construction of the present invention is shown generally at 500. It similarly includes the back liner sheet
 504 and the facestock 508 adhered to a front surface thereof with adhesive 512, as shown
 in FIG. 25. Similarly, margin 516 and the center gutter portion 520 of the facestock have
 20 been cut and removed. Die cut lines 524, 528 are formed in both the liner sheet to but not through the facestock and through the facestock to but not through the liner sheet. The die cut lines 524 through the facestock form parallel rows of spaced rounded rectangular labels 534. For example, as shown in FIG. 23, eight rows of five labels are formed. Thin breakable facestock necks separate adjacent labels in each row.

The die cut lines 528 in the liner sheet 504 form a plurality of liner strips 550, each of the strips is comprised of a series of rectangular liner sheet portions 554 connected at the center ends to the adjacent liner sheet portions with necks 558. Each of the liner sheet portions 554 has the same shape but with slightly larger dimensions than the underlying and attached facestock label 534. The liner sheet necks 558 provide
 30 sturdy connections between the liner sheet portions 554 such that the entire strip 550 can be removed without the liner sheet portions 554 separating. It is removed after the sheet has been passed through a printer 170 and the indicia 560 printed on the top surfaces of the facestock labels as depicted in FIG. 26.

In other words, the liner sheet strip 550 is peeled off or removed from the sheet, leaving the exposed backsides of the respective adhesive labels 534. The sheet can then be manipulated such that the exposed backsides of the labels 534 are positioned on the respective stacked and staggered tabs 570 of the dividers or file folders 574 as shown in
5 FIG. 28. The labels 534 are pressed down into position to provide a firm, straight adhesion of the labels to the tabs 570, as depicted in FIG. 29. The remainder of the sheet 578 is then pulled off of the labels 534 as shown in FIG. 30, leaving them properly applied on the tabs.

An advantage of construction of 500 is that more than one row of labels can be
10 applied at the same time by removing more than one of the liner strips 534. A system for doing this is shown in FIG. 31, where, for example, four rows of printed labels can be applied at the same time to four sets of dividers 586. If the dividers 586 are offset or stacked in a stepped fashion relative to one another, a method for doing this consistently and accurately and holding the sets in this offset position is shown by the pouch 600 of
15 FIG. 31. The pouch 600 has a series of staggered pockets 604, each for holding a respective set of dividers 586.

In other words, FIG. 31 shows a system of placing four rows of labels on tab dividers in a single step. The label sheet construction can be the sheet 500, for example, or constructions as illustrated herein as would be apparent to those skilled in the art. The
20 tab dividers 586 are placed in the unique pouch 600 of the present invention, which positions them in a staggered layout. The pouch 600 can be made from a sheet of paper with several pockets 604 of the same material, glued on the body of the pouch by adhesive. The paper will preferably be ninety pound index or higher basis weight material that can be durable as sensitive dividers are placed in and out of the pouches.
25 This pouch 600 speeds the label application process where numbers of different sets of dividers must be labeled as part of a single operation. This speeds the labeling operation and helps ensure accurate alignment and placement of the labels with minimal user handling.

Examples of materials usable for the label applicator constructions disclosed
30 herein are for the clear film label for laser printers: the facestock can be 1.5 mil polyester with laser topcoating, the adhesive can be permanent acrylic adhesive, and the liner can be 3.4 mil paper release liner. For the clear film label for inkjet printers, the facestock can be 1.5 mil polyester with inkjet top coating, the adhesive can be permanent acrylic adhesive, and the liner can be 3.4 mil paper release liner. Alternatives range from

using ink and toner receptive facestock material to using both permanent and removable adhesives. As an example for paper labels, the facestock can be 4.0 mil paper facestock, the adhesive can be acrylic emulsion and the liner can be 2.8 mil paper liner.

A manufacturing process of the present invention as shown schematically in FIG. 32 at 700. Referring thereto, the material is a laminate consisting of an ink and/or laser receptive top coated facestock laminated via pressure sensitive adhesive to a release coated paper liner. The facestock can be ink or toner receptive paper or film. The adhesive can be any acrylic emulsion, solvent or hot melt pressure sensitive adhesive that is permanent or removable. And the release liner is a release coated liner. It is supplied in roll form 704 for converting into label sheets. The converting operation may or may not include printing, which generally speaking is not critical to the function or application of the label product.

The material is web fed through the converting press, such as the Mark Andy 4120, so as to pass through an initial rotary die station 712 that, when and where the product requires it, cuts through the liner but not through the polyester facestock. The anvil roller 716 is on top and the cutting die 720 is below at this station, as shown in the drawing. The rotary die that is in the initial die station may or may not include a perforation blade, which makes intermittent cut through the liner along the center of the web.

The web may or may not be turned over before it is passed through a second rotary die station 730 that, where the product requires it, cuts through the polyester facestock but not through the liner. The web then passes through a matrix removal station 740 that lifts and removes a section of the face material 744 which typically includes, but is not limited to, the perimeter around the label sheet and may or may not include a strip removed from the center of the sheet that coincides with the perforation in the liner.

Finally, the web passes through a sheeting station 750, which uses one or more cross-directional blades to cut the web into individual sheets. The sheets are fed into a packaging/collating station 760, which includes a stacker, which stacks the sheets one on top of the other into predetermined count stacks. The individual stacks are either fed into a collator, or fed into a packaging area, where they are packaged in bulk for later collation with other materials.

From the foregoing detailed description, it will be evident that there are a number of changes, adaptations and modifications of the present invention which come within

the province of those skilled in the art. For example, the labels, instead of being passed through a printer or copier, are written directly thereon by a pencil, pen or the like, or the labels are provided on the sheet with the indicia pre-printed. Or the labels can be unprinted color coded labels. Another alternative is for the labels when on the sheet to

5 not have adhesive thereon but rather to be detached or removed and then attached to an adhesive surface. However, it is intended that all such variations not departing from the spirit of the invention be considered as within the scope thereof.

What is Claimed is:

1. A label applicator construction, comprising:
a liner sheet;
facestock attached to the liner sheet;
the facestock including at least one weakened separation line defining at least a portion of perimeters of a facestock label and a facestock handle portion;
the facestock label and the handle portion being removable as a unit from the liner sheet; and
the handle portion being separable from the facestock label with the facestock label adhered in a desired position on an article.
2. The construction of claim 1 wherein the liner sheet includes at least one weakened separation line defining at least a portion of a perimeter of a liner sheet portion on the handle portion of the unit.
3. The construction of claim 1 wherein a liner sheet portion of the liner sheet is adhered to the handle portion and is removable from the liner sheet as part of the unit.
4. The construction of claim 3 wherein at least one cut line in the liner sheet defines at least a portion of a perimeter of the liner sheet portion.
5. The construction of claim 4 wherein the at least one cut line penetrates the liner sheet but not the facestock.
6. The construction of claim 3 wherein the liner sheet portion is smaller than the handle portion.
7. The construction of claim 3 wherein the handle portion is larger than the liner sheet portion and defines a frame around the liner sheet portion.
8. The construction of claim 1 wherein a separation line having at least one tie separates the handle portion from the facestock label, and the at least one tie is adapted to be broken by a user to separate the handle portion from the facestock label with the facestock label in the desired position.

9. The construction of claim 1 wherein the facestock label has an elongate configuration having an elongate side and an end.

10. The construction of claim 9 wherein the handle portion is attached to and extends out from the end.

11. The construction of claim 9 wherein the handle portion is attached to and extends out from the side.

12. The construction of claim 1 wherein the facestock label has an elongate configuration having first and second ends, the handle portion defines a first handle portion extending out from the first end, and the facestock includes a second handle portion extending out from the second end.

13. The construction of claim 1 wherein the facestock label defines a first facestock label, the handle portion defines a first handle portion, the facestock further includes a second facestock label and a second handle portion, wherein the second facestock label and the second handle portion are manually removable from the liner sheet as a connected unit and the second handle portion is separable from the second facestock label with the second facestock label adhered in a desired position to an article.

14. The construction of claim 13 wherein the liner sheet includes a liner sheet portion which is adhered to the second handle portion and is removable from the liner sheet as part of the connected unit.

15. The construction of claim 13 wherein the liner sheet includes a first liner sheet portion attached to the first handle portion and a second liner sheet portion attached to the second handle portion.

16. The construction of claim 15 wherein the second liner sheet portion is separable along a weakened separation line from the second facestock label with the second facestock label in the desired position.

17. The construction of claim 1 wherein the facestock label has an ink and/or toner receptive surface.

18. The construction of claim 1 wherein the facestock is an ink and/or laser receptive topcoated facestock which is laminated via pressure sensitive adhesive to the liner sheet.

19. The construction of claim 1 wherein the facestock is attached to the liner sheet with adhesive, and the facestock label is adhered with the adhesive in the desired position.

20. The construction of claim 1 wherein the facestock includes first and second facestock sheets attached to the liner sheet with a gap therebetween, and the liner sheet includes a weakened separation line extending along the gap so that the construction can be separated into two pieces.

21. The construction of claim 1 wherein the facestock includes a weakened separation line separating the handle portion and the facestock label.

22. The construction of claim 1 wherein the liner sheet includes a portion to which the facestock label is directly adhered before being removed and the facestock label is peeled off of the portion when removed as the unit.

23. The construction of claim 1 wherein the facestock label defines a first facestock label, the handle portion defines a first handle portion, the unit defines a first unit, and the facestock label includes a second facestock label and a second facestock handle portion, the second facestock label and the second handle portion being removable as a second unit from the liner sheet.

24. A label applicator construction, comprising:
a liner sheet;
facestock attached to the liner sheet, the facestock including at least one facestock weakened separation line defining at least in part a plurality of aligned facestock labels;

the liner sheet including at least one liner sheet weakened separation line at least in part separating the liner sheet into a removable liner strip and a liner body portion; and the liner strip when in a separated position being separated from the liner body portion and backsides of the facestock labels being exposed such that the liner body portion can be manipulated such that the facestock labels are in desired positions relative to at least one surface and the facestock labels applied to the at least one surface.

25. The construction of claim 24 wherein the liner strip includes liner sheet portions adhered to respective ones of the facestock labels before the liner strip is positioned in the separated position.

26. The construction of claim 25 wherein the liner strip includes a liner sheet bar to which the liner sheet portions are connected.

27. The construction of claim 24 wherein the facestock includes ties which connect the labels together when on the liner sheet and allow the labels to be separated to position them in the separated position.

28. The construction of claim 24 wherein the liner sheet weakened separation line is a die cut line.

29. The construction of claim 24 wherein the facestock weakened separation line is a die cut line.

30. The construction of claim 24 wherein the at least one surface includes staggered tabs of a stack of tabbed divider sheets.

31. The construction of claim 24 wherein that at least one surface includes staggered tabs of a stack of file folders.

32. The construction of claim 24 wherein the liner sheet and the facestock together define a pressure sensitive laminate material.

33. The construction of claim 24 wherein releasable adhesive attaches the facestock to the liner sheet.

34. The construction of claim 24 wherein the facestock labels are ink and/or laser receptive.

35. The construction of claim 24 wherein the liner sheet is a release coated paper liner sheet.

36. The construction of claim 35 wherein the facestock is an ink and/or laser receptive topcoated facestock which is laminated via pressure sensitive adhesive to the liner sheet.

37. The construction of claim 24 wherein top edges of each of the facestock labels are freestanding and unattached when the liner strip is in the separated position.

38. The construction of claim 24 wherein the liner sheet and the facestock form a laminate construction that can be passed through a printer and desired indicia printed on the labels before the liner strip is removed to the separated position.

39. The construction of claim 24 wherein the plurality of aligned facestock labels defines a plurality of aligned facestock first labels aligned in a first line, the removable liner strip defines a first liner strip, the liner body portion defines a first liner body portion, the facestock includes a plurality of aligned facestock second labels aligned in a second line spaced from and parallel to the first line, the liner sheet includes a removable second liner strip disposed substantially between the aligned facestock first and second lines of labels.

40. The construction of claim 39 wherein the first liner body portion includes the second liner body portion.

41. The construction of claim 24 wherein a portion of the facestock is adhered to the removable liner strip and is removable therewith relative to the liner body portion.

42. The construction of claim 24 wherein the aligned facestock labels are interconnected by thin facestock necks which are breakable by a user to separate the facestock labels.

43. The construction of claim 24 wherein the liner strip includes a plurality of protruding portions to which respective facestock labels are adhered before the liner strip is in the separated position.

44. A label applicator construction, comprising:
a liner sheet;
facestock attached to the liner sheet with adhesive, the facestock including a plurality of aligned facestock labels;
the liner sheet including a removable liner strip and a liner body portion; and
the liner strip when in a separated position being separated from the liner body portion and backsides of the facestock labels thereby being exposed whereby the liner body portion can be manipulated such that the facestock labels are in desired positions relative to at least one surface and the facestock labels can be applied with the adhesive on the backsides of the facestock labels to the at least one surface in the desired positions.

45. The construction of claim 44 wherein the facestock includes an ink and/or laser receptive facestock sheet and the liner sheet is a release coated paper liner sheet.

46. A label applicator construction, comprising:
a liner sheet;
facestock attached to the liner sheet, the facestock including at least one facestock weakened separation line defining at least in part a plurality of aligned facestock labels;
the liner sheet including a liner strip and a liner body portion;
the liner strip being positionable in an attached position on the facestock labels and in an alternative removed position removed from the facestock labels; and
the liner strip when in the removed position exposing bottom surfaces of the labels such that the labels can be removed and applied in alignment to at least one surface.

47. The construction of claim 46 further comprising adhesive which adheres the liner strip to the facestock labels when the liner strip is in the attached position and which also adheres the labels to the at least one surface when the labels are applied in alignment thereto.

48. The construction of claim 46 wherein the strip is configured with serially-connected strip portions interconnected by thin necks, each of the strip portions being attached on a respective one of the labels when the strip is in the attached position.

49. The construction of claim 48 wherein each of the strip portions has substantially the same size and shape as its respective label.

50. The construction of claim 48 wherein each of the strip portions is slightly larger than its respective label.

51. The construction of claim 46 wherein the liner body portion defines a handle for a user to grasp to maneuver the labels into position relative to the surface for application thereto.

52. The construction of claim 46 further comprising adhesive adhering the facestock to the liner sheet.

53. The construction of claim 52 wherein the adhesive is removable or repositionable adhesive.

54. The construction of claim 46 wherein the liner strip defines a first liner strip, the plurality of aligned facestock labels defines a plurality of aligned first facestock labels, the facestock includes a plurality of aligned second facestock labels disposed parallel to and spaced from the first facestock labels, the liner sheet including a second liner strip; and

wherein the second liner strip is positioned in an attached position on the second facestock labels and in an alternative removed position removed from the second facestock labels, the second liner strip when in the removed position exposing bottom

surfaces of the second facestock labels such that the second facestock labels can be removed and applied in alignment to at least one surface.

55. The construction of claim 46 wherein the liner sheet and the facestock form a laminate construction sheet, and with the labels removed and the liner strip in the removed position, a series of spaced holes through the laminate construction sheet are formed.

56. The construction of claim 55 wherein thin neck portions of the facestock uncoated with the liner sheet interconnect adjacent ones of the spaced holes.

57. The construction of claim 46 wherein the facestock includes first and second facestock portions separated by a thin space extending from side-to-side or end-to-end on the liner sheet, the liner sheet including a weakened separation line in the thin space whereby the liner sheet can be separated along the weakened separation line to define a first liner sheet portion on which the first facestock portion is attached and a separate second liner sheet portion on which the second facestock portion is attached.

58. The construction of claim 46 wherein the at least one surface includes staggered tabs of a stack of tabbed divider sheets.

59. The construction of claim 46 wherein that at least one surface includes staggered tabs of a stack of file folders.

60. The construction of claim 46 wherein the liner sheet and the facestock together define a pressure sensitive laminate material.

61. The construction of claim 46 wherein releasable adhesive attaches the facestock to the liner sheet.

62. The construction of claim 46 wherein the facestock labels are ink and/or laser receptive.

63. The construction of claim 46 wherein the liner sheet is a release coated paper liner sheet.

64. The construction of claim 63 wherein the facestock is an ink and/or laser receptive topcoated facestock which is laminated via pressure sensitive adhesive to the liner sheet.

65. The construction of claim 46 wherein the facestock labels have ink and/or toner receptive surfaces.

66. A label applicator construction, comprising:
facestock including a plurality of aligned facestock labels;
a liner sheet assembly including at least first and second liner strips separable from one another;
the liner sheet assembly being adhered to the facestock;
the first liner strip being separable relative to the facestock to a separated position wherein adhesive backsides of the facestock labels are in exposed positions; and
with the facestock labels in the exposed positions, the liner sheet assembly including the second liner strip can be manipulated by a user into a desired position relative to at least one surface and the facestock labels separated from one another and adhesively applied to the at least one surface.

67. The construction of claim 66 wherein the first liner strip is separable to the separated position after the construction has been passed through a printer and indicia printed on top surfaces of the facestock labels.

68. The construction of claim 66 wherein the facestock labels when in the exposed positions are attached to adjacent portions of the facestock only by breakable ties.

69. The construction of claim 66 wherein the facestock labels when in the exposed positions are positioned along and extend out from an edge of the liner sheet.

70. The construction of claim 66 wherein at least one die cut line separates the first liner strip from the second liner strip.

71. The construction of claim 70 wherein adhesive on the facestock assembly holds the first and second liner strips together until the first liner strip is separated to the separated position.

72. The construction of claim 66 wherein the facestock includes a first facestock strip adhered to the first liner strip and a second facestock strip adhered to the second liner strip.

73. The construction of claim 66 wherein the liner sheet assembly includes a first liner sheet portion which includes the first and second liner strips, a second liner sheet portion and a weakened separation line separating the first and second liner sheet portions.

74. The construction of claim 66 wherein the facestock labels have ink and/or toner receptive surfaces.

75. A label applicator construction, comprising:
a liner sheet;
facestock attached with adhesive to the liner sheet;
at least one liner sheet cut line through the liner sheet but not the adjacent facestock;
at least one facestock cut line through the facestock but not through the liner sheet;
the at least one facestock cut line defining at least a portion of perimeters of facestock labels; and
the liner sheet cut lines allowing separation of a portion of the liner sheet from another portion to thereby assist a user in positioning the facestock labels at desired locations on at least one surface and adhered thereto with the adhesive.

76. The construction of claim 75 wherein the at least one facestock cut line defines at least a portion of a perimeter of a facestock handle portion adjacent to one of

the facestock labels and removable from the facestock as a unit and subsequently separable therefrom.

77. The construction of claim 76 wherein the at least one liner sheet cut line defines at least a portion of a perimeter of liner sheet handle portion attached to the facestock handle portion and forming part of the unit.

78. The construction of claim 75 wherein the facestock labels before separation are aligned with one another, and the at least one liner sheet cut line defines a liner sheet backing strip attached to backsides of the aligned facestock labels and removable therefrom to expose backsides of the facestock labels.

79. The construction of claim 75 wherein the at least one liner sheet cut line separates the liner sheet into a removable liner strip and a liner body portion, the removable liner strip when separated from the liner body portion exposes backsides of the facestock labels.

80. The construction of claim 75 wherein adhesive is a pressure sensitive adhesive, and the facestock is an ink and/or laser receptive topcoated facestock sheet which is laminated via the adhesive to the liner sheet.

81. The construction of claim 75 wherein with the liner sheet portion separated from the another liner sheet portion, the facestock labels are serially interconnected with breakable facestock thin connector strips.

82. The construction of claim 75 wherein the at least one facestock cut line defines a facestock handle portion adjacent one of the facestock labels and separable therewith as a unit from the liner sheet.

83. The construction of claim 82 wherein the at least one liner sheet cut line defines a liner sheet portion attached to the facestock handle portion and forming part of the separable unit.

84. The construction of claim 82 wherein the at least one facestock cut line defines a weakened separation line between the facestock handle portion and the adjacent facestock label and allowing separation of the facestock handle portion from the adjacent facestock label after the unit has been separated.

85. The construction of claim 75 wherein the facestock labels have ink and/or toner receptive surfaces.

86. The construction of claim 75 wherein each of the facestock labels has a rectangular shape with rounded corners.

87. The construction of claim 75 wherein the facestock is a printable polyester film or Mylar.

88. A label applicator method, comprising:
providing a liner sheet having facestock attached thereto;
the facestock including a facestock label and a facestock handle portion;
removing the facestock label and facestock handle portion as a unit from the liner sheet; and
after the removing, adhering the facestock label in a desired position on an article.

89. The method of claim 88 further comprising after the adhering, separating the facestock handle portion from the facestock label.

90. The method of claim 88 wherein the separating includes tearing along a weakened separation line separating the facestock handle portion from the facestock label.

91. The method of claim 88 wherein the liner sheet includes a liner sheet portion which is attached to the facestock handle portion and forms part of the unit.

92. The method of claim 91 wherein the removing and adhering include grasping the liner sheet portion.

93. The method of claim 88 further comprising before the removing, printing indicia on the facestock label.

94. The method of claim 93 wherein the printing includes passing the liner sheet and attached facestock through a printer or copier.

95. The method of claim 88 wherein the facestock handle portion is releasable attached along a long edge of the facestock label.

96. The method of claim 88 wherein the facestock handle portion is releasably attached along a short end of the facestock label.

97. The method of claim 88 wherein the facestock handle portion defines a first handle portion, the short end defines a first short end, the facestock label has a second short end opposite to the first short end and the facestock includes a second facestock handle releasably attached along the second short end and forming part of the unit.

98. The method of claim 97 wherein the liner sheet includes first and second liner sheet portions attached to the first and second facestock handles, respectively, and forming part of the unit, and further comprising after or concurrently with the adhering, separating the first and second liner sheet portions and the first and second facestock handles from the facestock label.

99. The method of claim 88 wherein the facestock label defines a first facestock label, the facestock includes a second facestock label, and before the removing, passing the facestock and liner sheet through a printer and printing first indicia on the first facestock label and second indicia on the second facestock label.

100. A label applicator method, comprising:
providing a liner sheet and facestock attached to the liner sheet, the facestock including a plurality of aligned facestock labels, and the liner sheet including a liner body portion and a liner strip;

separating the liner strip from the liner body portion from an attached position into a separated position wherein the facestock labels are connected to the liner body portion and backsides of the facestock labels are exposed;

manipulating at least one of the liner body portion and at least one surface relative to one other such that the exposed backsides of the aligned facestock labels are in a desired position relative to the at least one surface; and

with the aligned facestock labels in the desired position, applying the aligned facestock labels to the at least one surface, the applying including separating the aligned facestock labels from the liner body portion.

101. The method of claim 100 further comprising before the separating, passing the liner sheet and facestock through a printer or copier and printing indicia on the facestock labels.

102. The method of claim 100 further comprising before the manipulating, printing indicia on the facestock labels.

103. The method of claim 100 wherein the strip includes with the liner strip in the attached position, liner sheet portions adhered to the backsides of respective ones of the facestock labels, and a liner sheet bar to which the liner sheet portions are connected.

104. The method of claim 100 wherein with the liner strip in the attached position the facestock is attached to the liner sheet with adhesive, and the applying uses the adhesive.

105. The method of claim 100 wherein the at least one surface includes staggered tabs of a stack of tabbed divider sheets.

106. The method of claim 100 wherein with the liner strip in the separated position, top edges of each of the facestock labels are freestanding and unattached.

107. The method of claim 100 wherein the at least one surface includes staggered tabs of file folders.

108. The method of claim 100 wherein the applying includes manually pressing each of the facestock labels to the at least one surface, and the separating includes breaking ties attaching the facestock labels to adjacent portions of the facestock.

109. The method of claim 100 wherein the plurality of aligned facestock labels defines a plurality of first aligned facestock labels aligned in a first line, the liner strip defines a first liner strip, the liner body portion defines a first liner body portion, the facestock includes a plurality of second aligned facestock labels aligned in a second line spaced from and parallel to the first liner, the liner sheet includes a second liner strip disposed substantially between the aligned first and second lines of labels, and further comprising after the applying, removing the second liner strip and applying the second aligned facestock labels.

110. The method of claim 100 further comprising before the applying steps, passing the facestock and liner sheet through a printer or copier and printing indicia on the first and second facestock labels.

111. A label applicator method, comprising:

providing a liner sheet assembly adhered to facestock, the facestock including a plurality of aligned first facestock labels and a plurality of aligned second facestock labels, the liner sheet assembly including first and second liner sheet strips separable from one another, the first liner sheet strip being in an attached position attached to the first facestock labels, and the second liner sheet strip being in an attached position attached to the second facestock labels;

removing the first liner sheet strip from the attached position to expose backsides of the first facestock labels;

manipulating at least one of the liner sheet assembly and at least one surface relative to the other such that the exposed backsides of the first facestock labels are in desired positions relative to the at least one surface; and

with the first facestock labels in the desired positions, applying the first facestock labels to the at least one surface, the applying including separating the first facestock labels from the facestock and from each other.

112. The method of claim 111 further comprising:

after the applying step, removing the second liner sheet strip from the attached position to expose backsides of the second facestock labels;

manipulating at least one of the liner sheet assembly and at least one second surface relative to the other such that the exposed backsides of the second facestock labels are in desired positions relative to the at least one second surface; and

with the second facestock labels in the desired positions, applying the second facestock labels to the at least one second surface, the second facestock labels applying including separating the second facestock labels from the facestock and from each other.

113. The method of claim 112 further comprising before the first facestock labels applying step, printing indicia on the first and second facestock labels.

114. The method of claim 111 wherein the removing includes peeling the first liner sheet strip off of the facestock.

115. The method of claim 111 wherein the at least one surface includes a stack of staggered tabs of file folders or index divider sheets.

116. The method of claim 111 wherein the liner sheet assembly is adhered with adhesive to the facestock, and the applying uses the adhesive.

117. The method of claim 111 wherein the first facestock labels are spaced and separated from one another with thin strips of the facestock, and the first facestock labels are in a line spaced from and parallel to a line of the second facestock labels.

118. The method of claim 111 wherein the manipulating includes holding the liner sheet assembly and manipulating it relative to the at least one surface.

119. A method of constructing a label applicator construction, comprising:
attaching facestock with adhesive to a liner sheet;
after the attaching, forming cut lines through the facestock but not the liner sheet to form a plurality of facestock labels; and

after the attaching, forming cut lines through the liner sheet but not the facestock to form liner sheet portions to assist in adhering the facestock printable labels to desired surfaces with the adhesive.

120. A label applicator system, comprising:

a holder for holding a plurality of sets of file folders, tab dividers or the like, each of the sets having aligned staggered tabs, the sets being held in stair-step relationship with the staggered tabs being exposed and parallel.

121. The system of claim 120 wherein the holder comprises a plurality of connected staggered pockets each for holding a separate one of the sets.

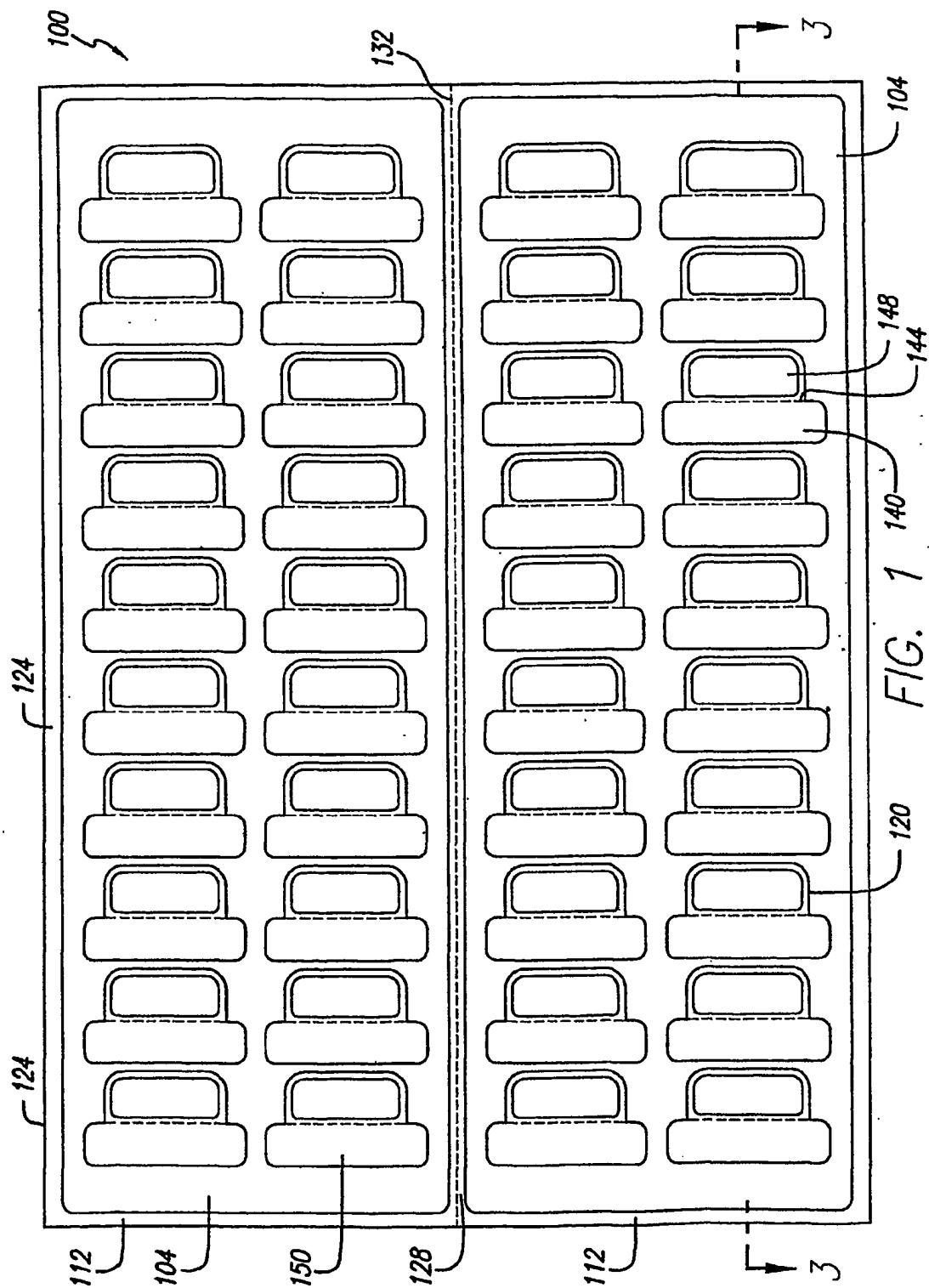
122. The system of claim 121 further comprising a label applicator sheet having a plurality of labels, the labels being aligned in rows, such that with the sheet on top of the sets in the holder, labels of each row are positioned on respective tabs of a respective set.

123. The system of claim 122 wherein the sheet includes a liner sheet and facestock adhered to a top of the liner sheet, the facestock sheet having weakened separation lines defining the labels, and the liner sheet having liner sheet positions removable to expose adhesive coated backs of the labels.

124. The system of claim 123 wherein the liner sheet portions comprise liner sheet strips for each row of labels.

125. The system of claim 120 wherein the holder comprises a pouch having a plurality of pockets each for holding a separate one of the sets.

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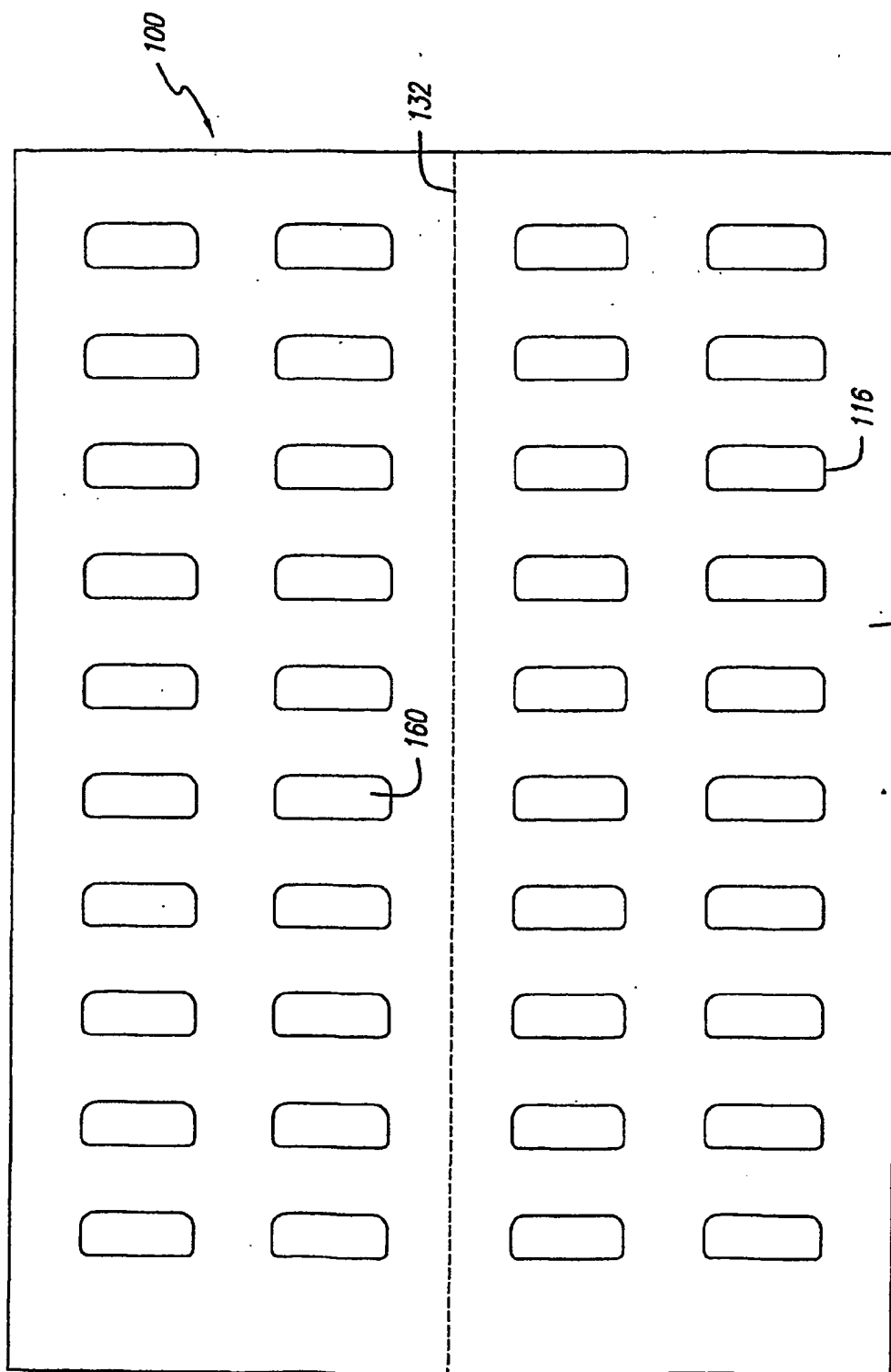


FIG. 2

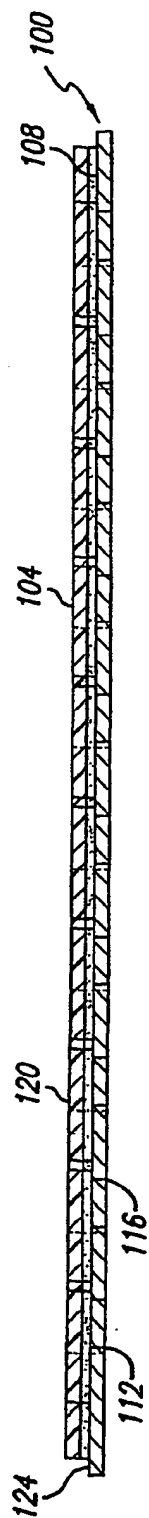


FIG. 3

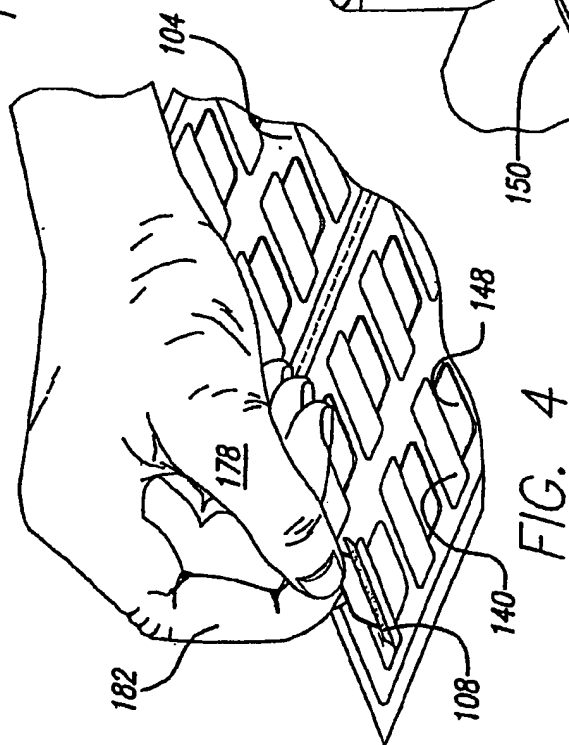


FIG. 4

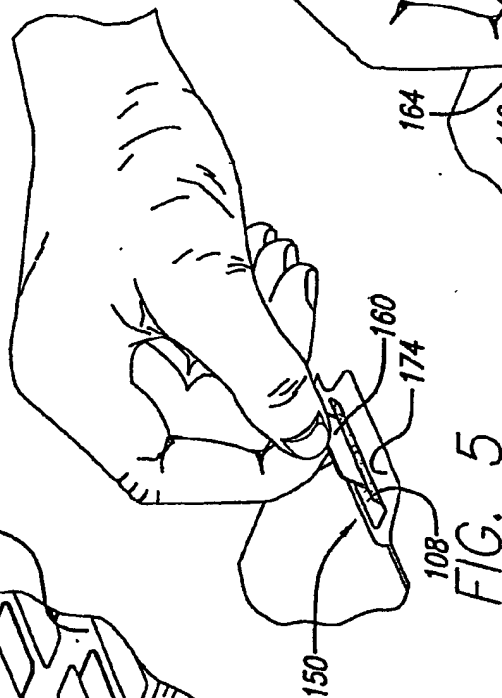


FIG. 5

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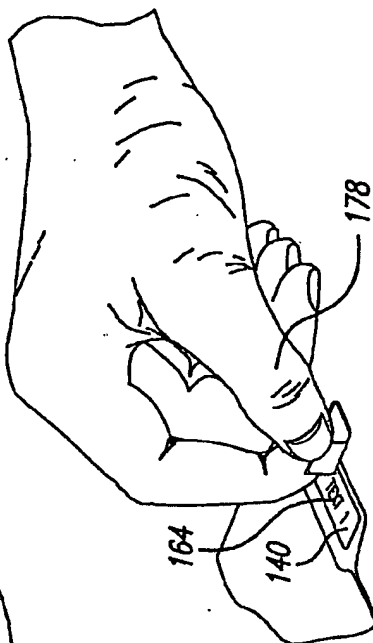
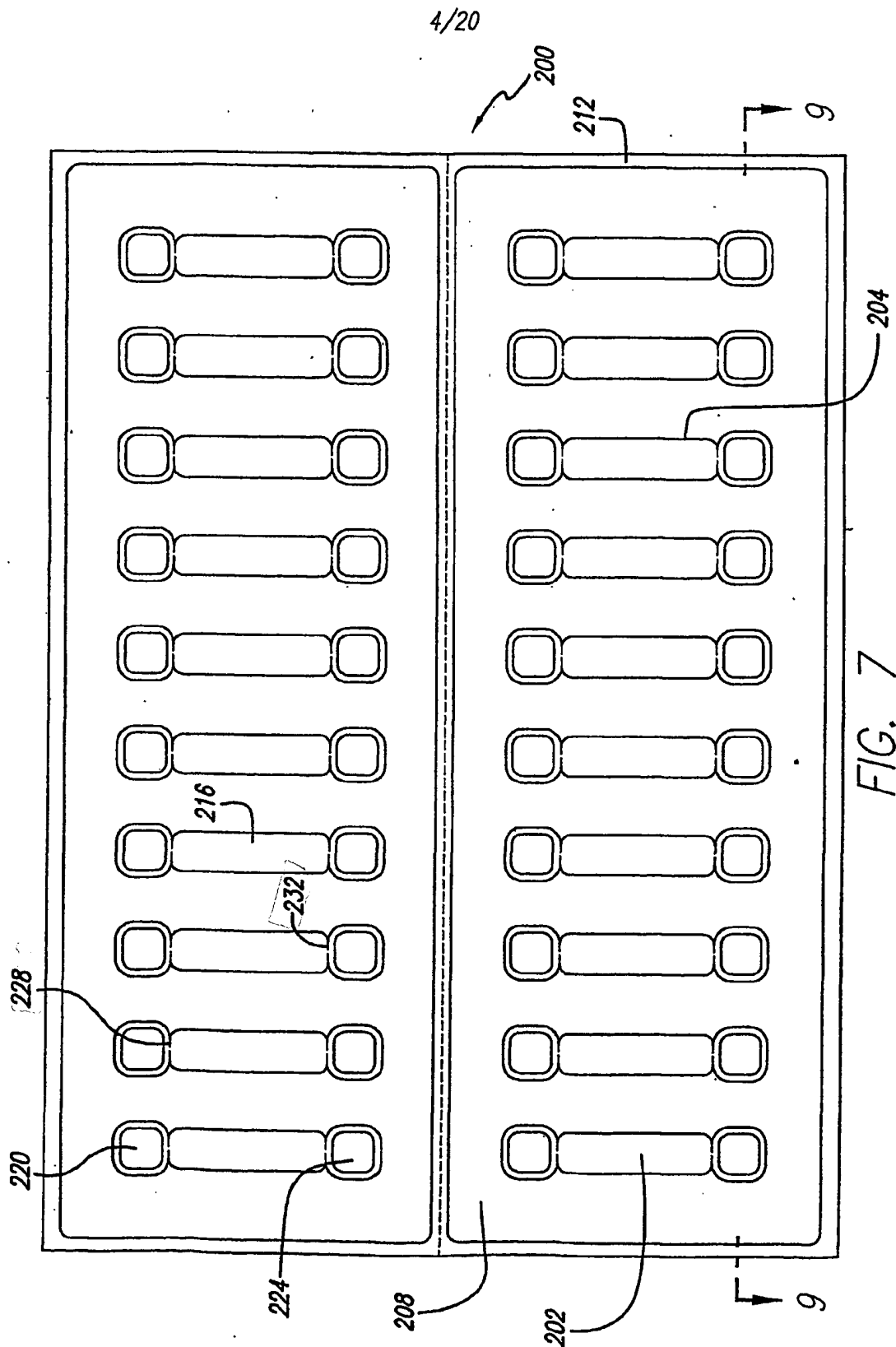


FIG. 6



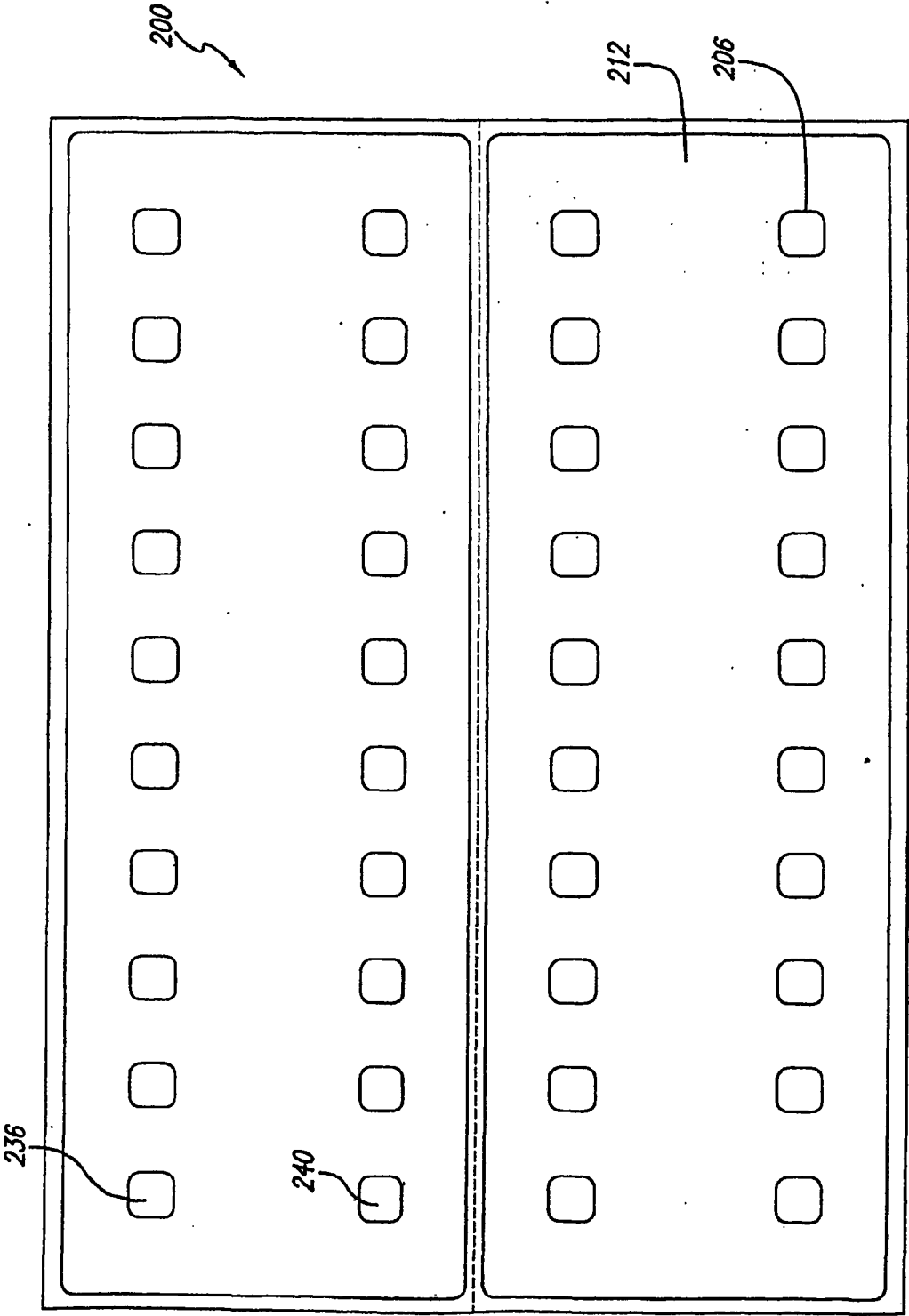


FIG. 8

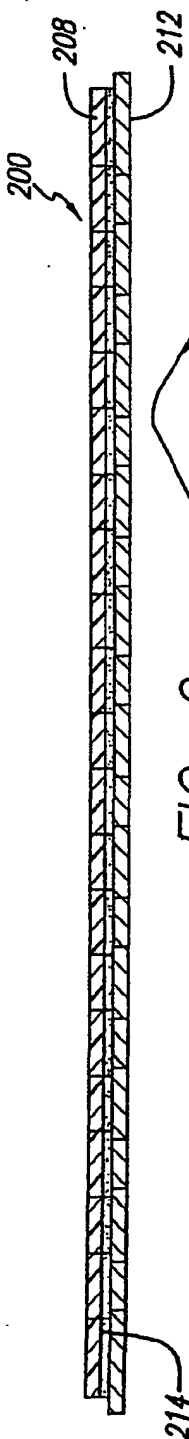


FIG. 9

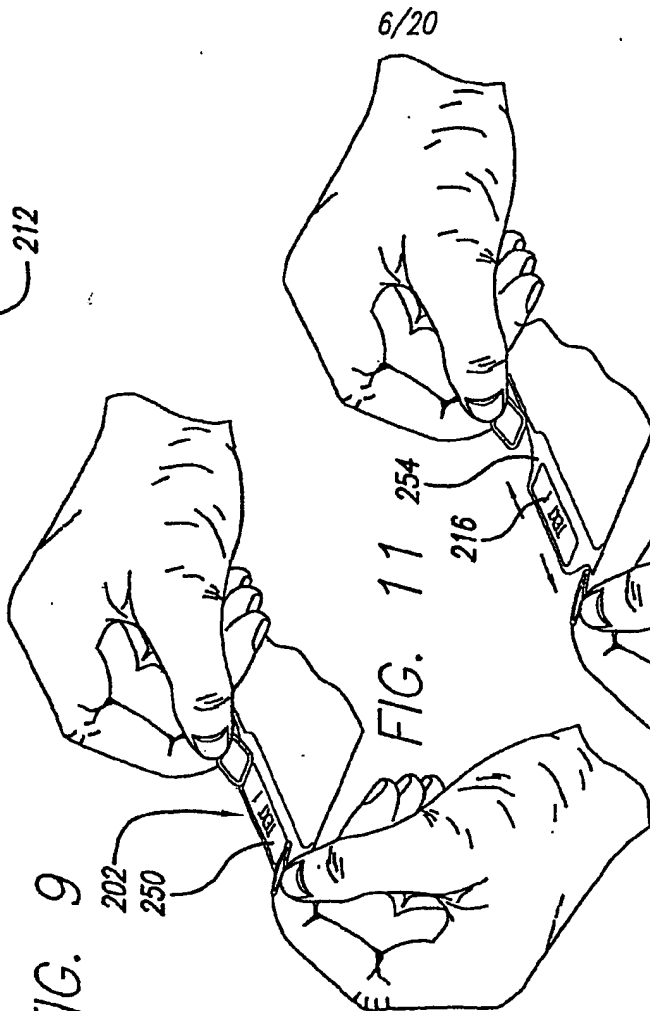


FIG. 11

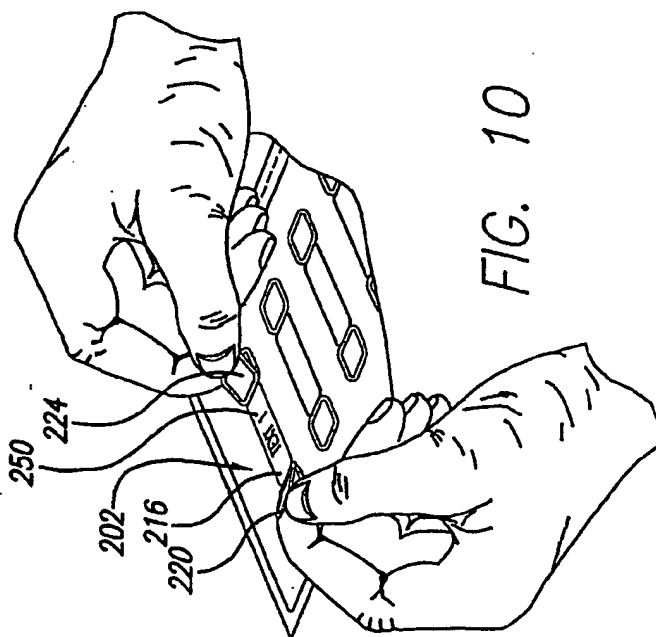


FIG. 10



FIG. 12

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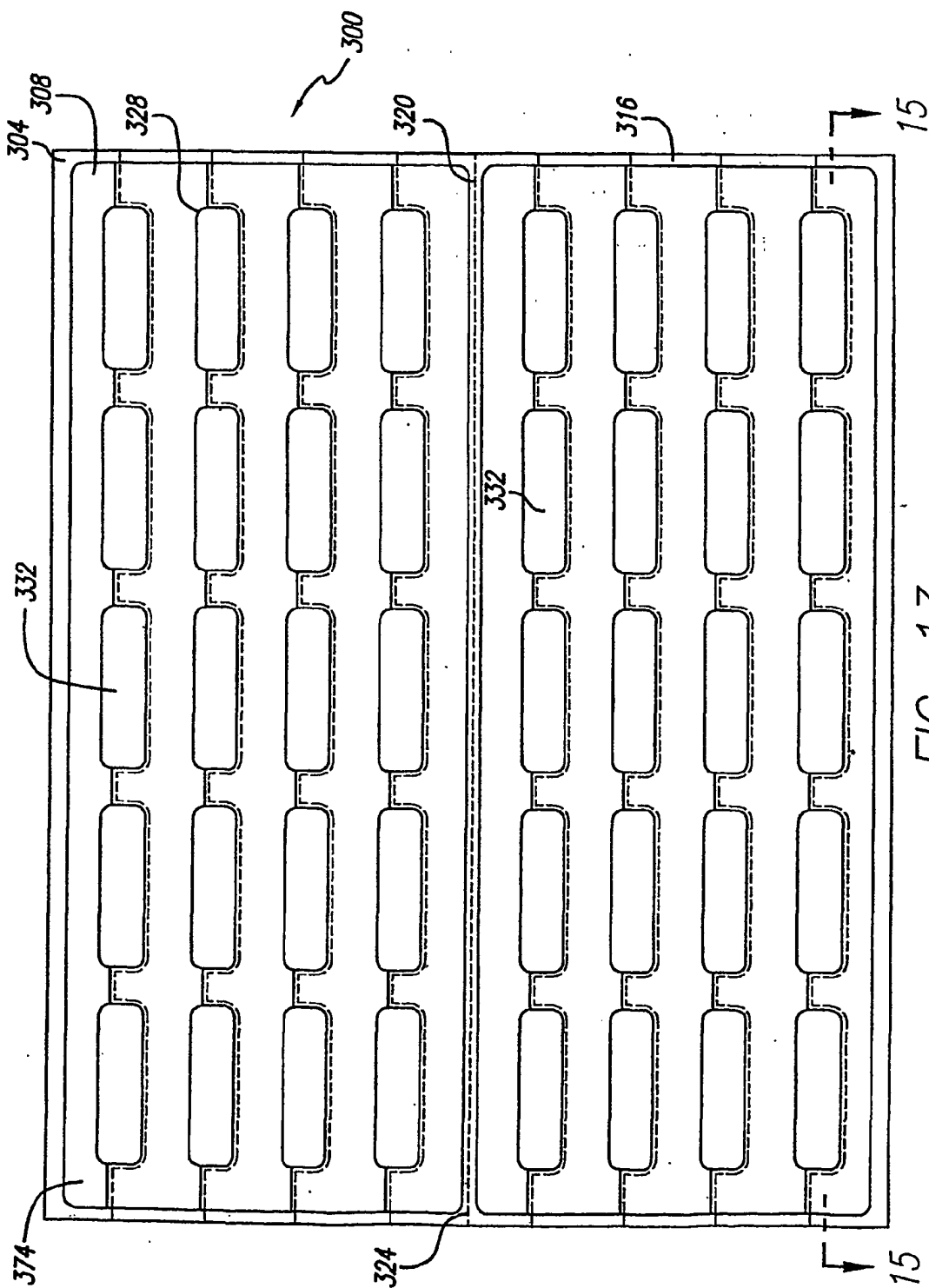


FIG. 13

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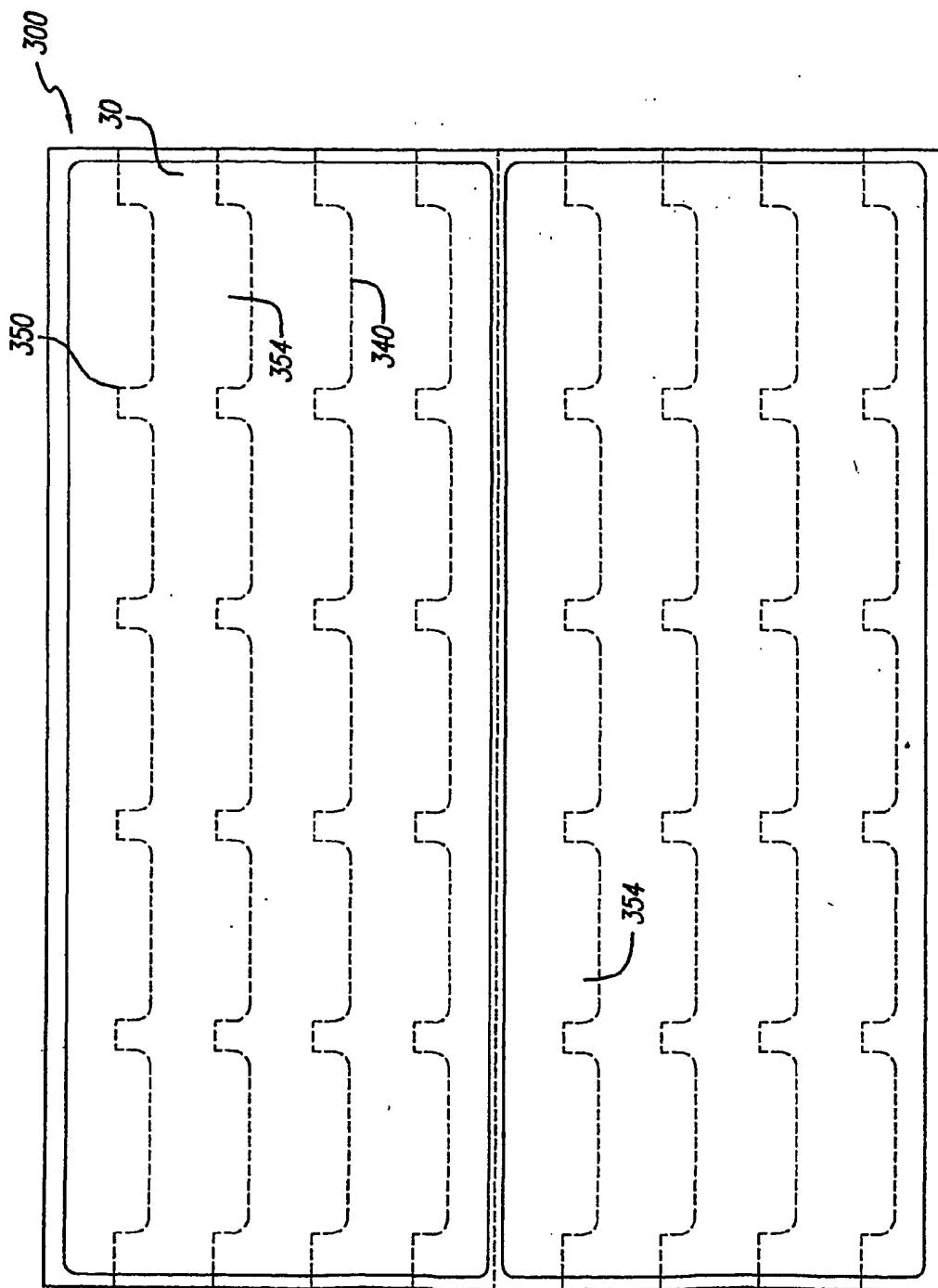


FIG. 14

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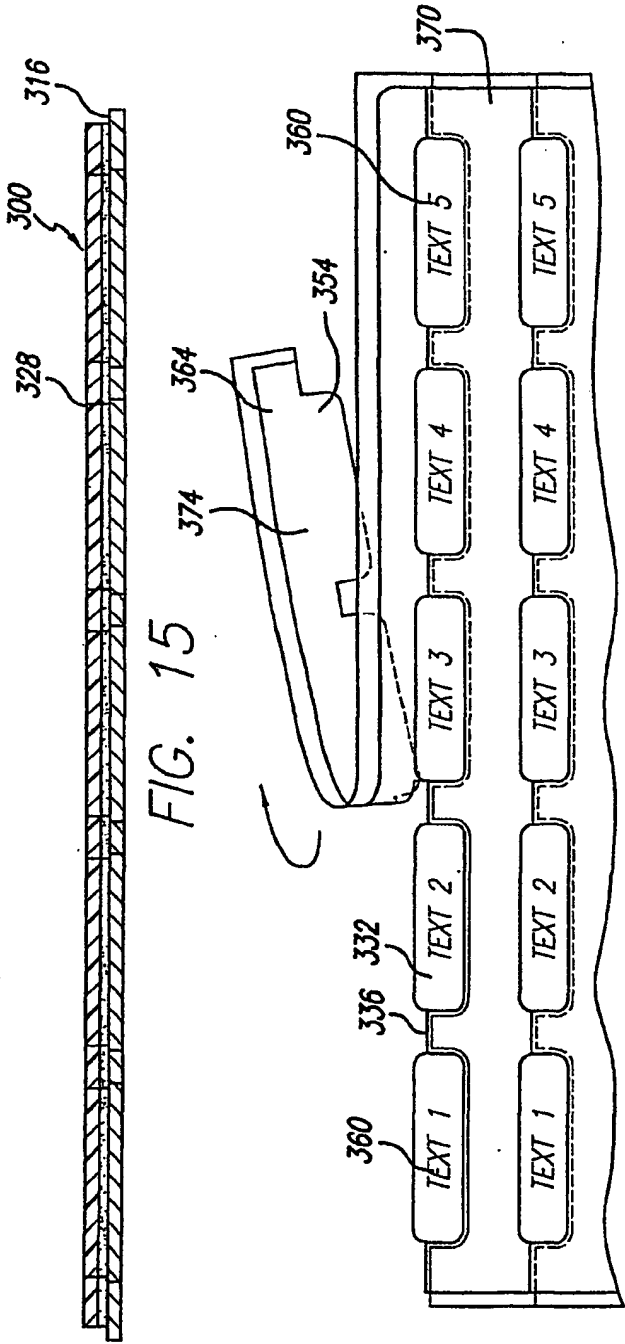


FIG. 16

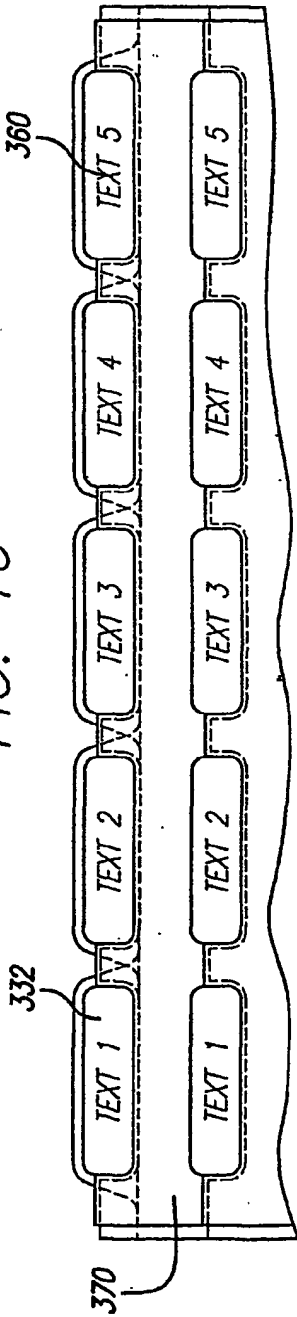


FIG. 17

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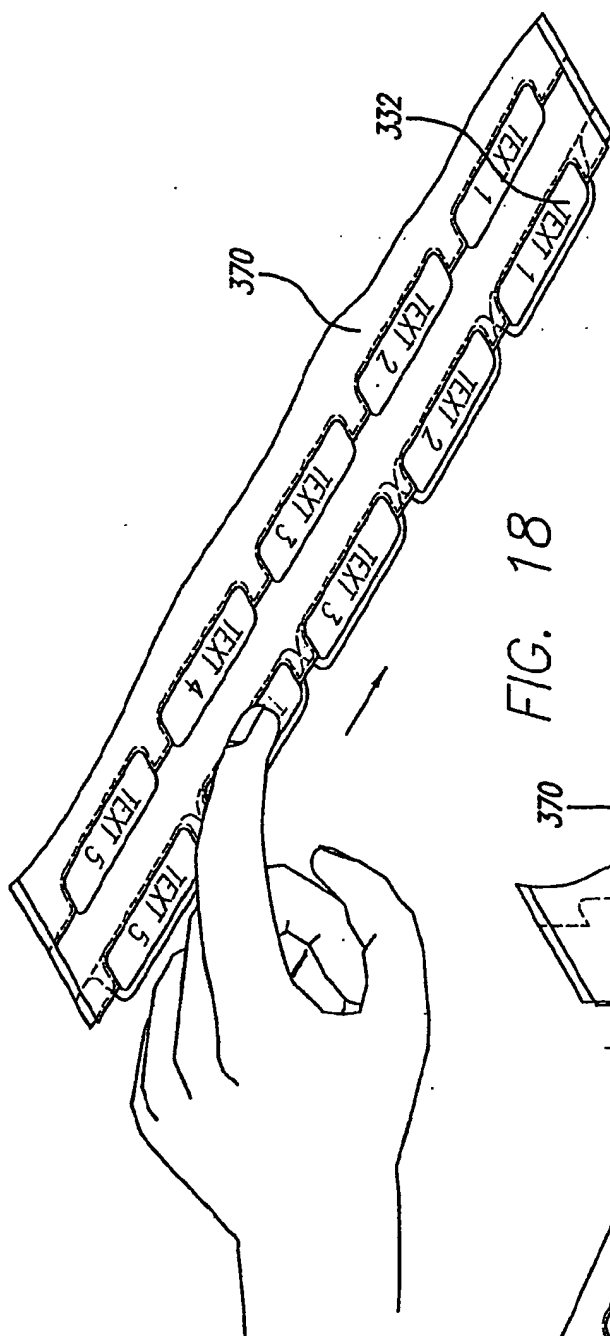


FIG. 18

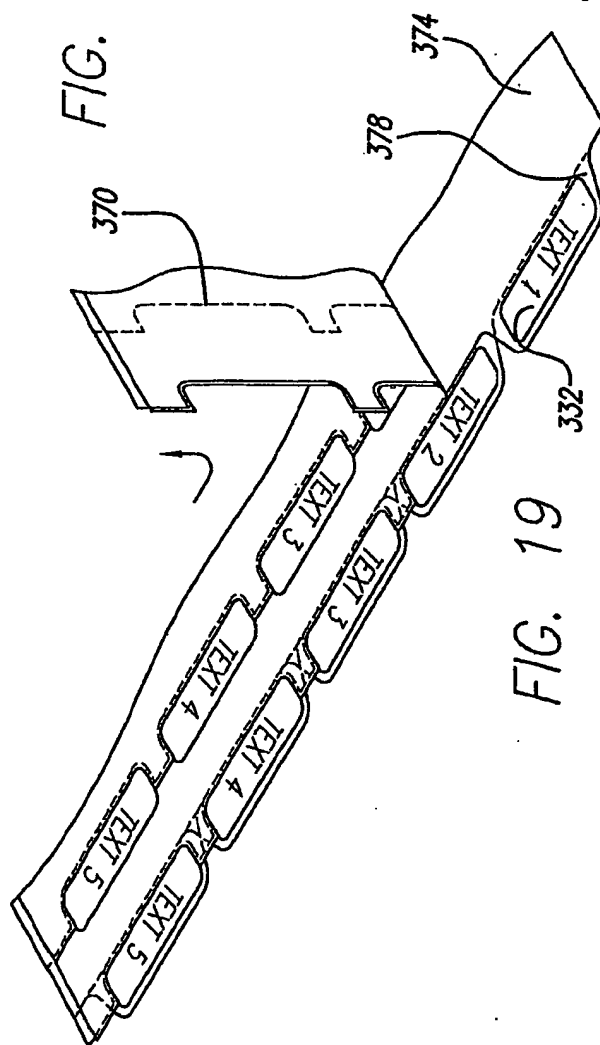


FIG. 19

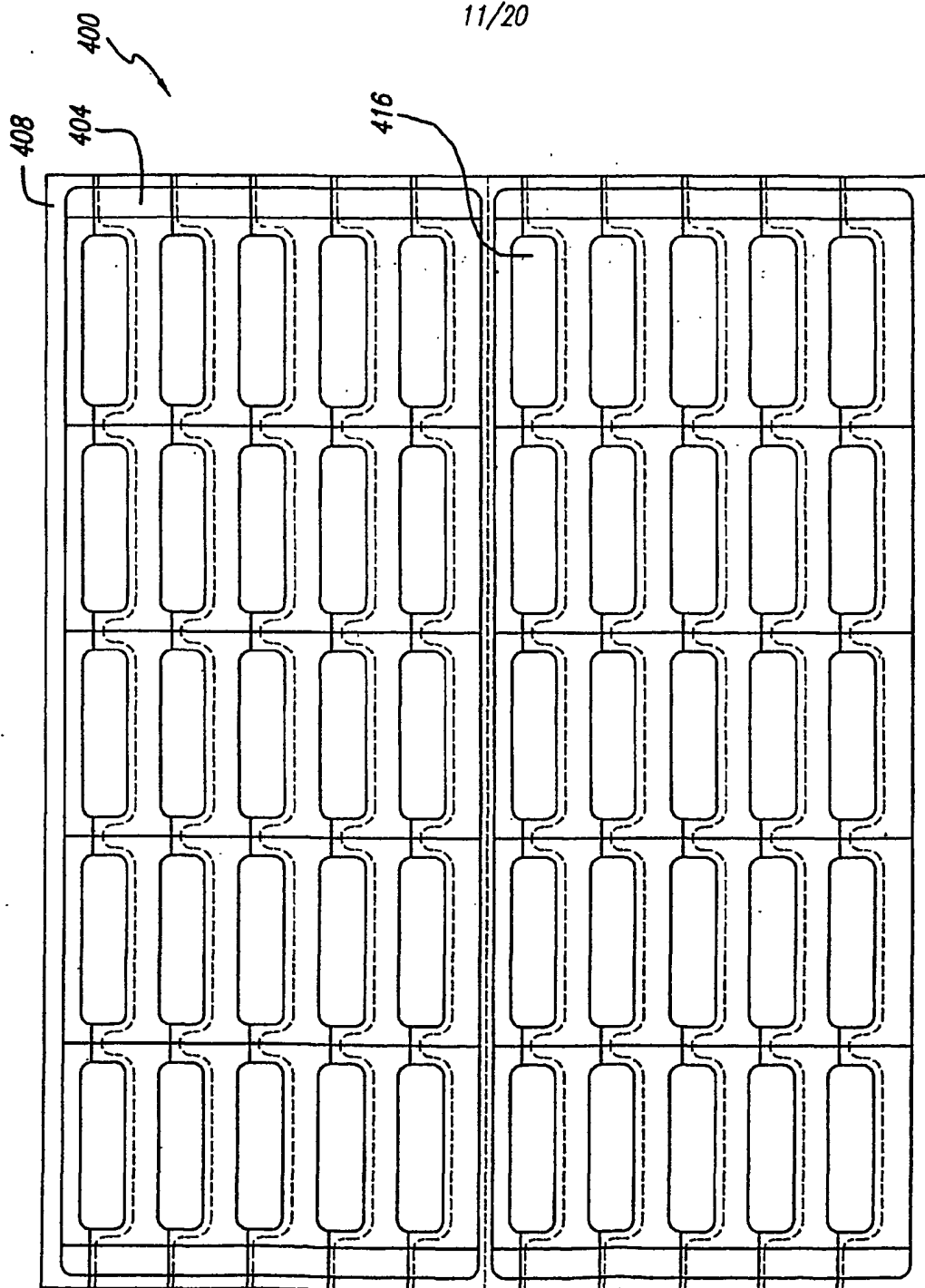
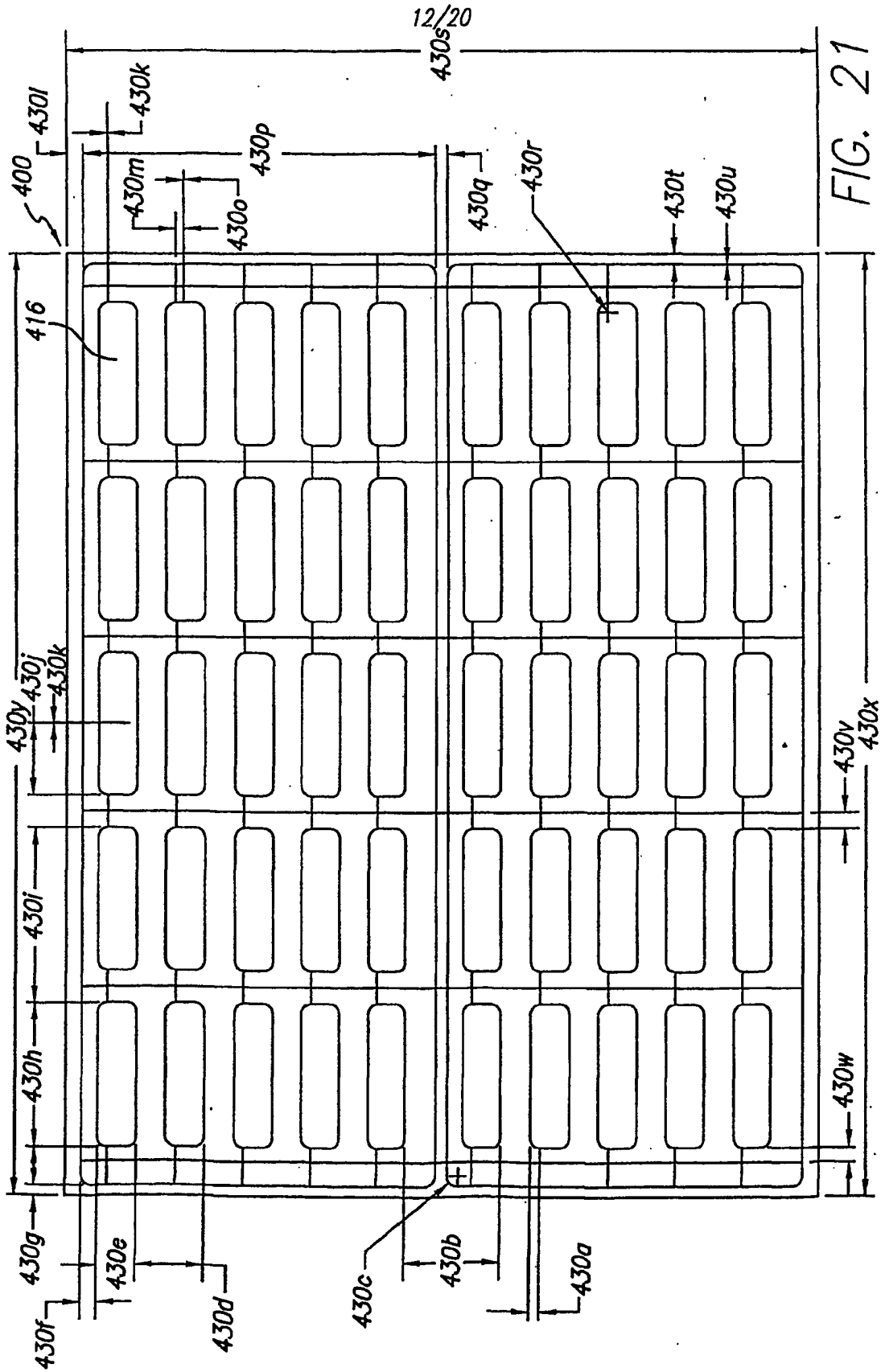
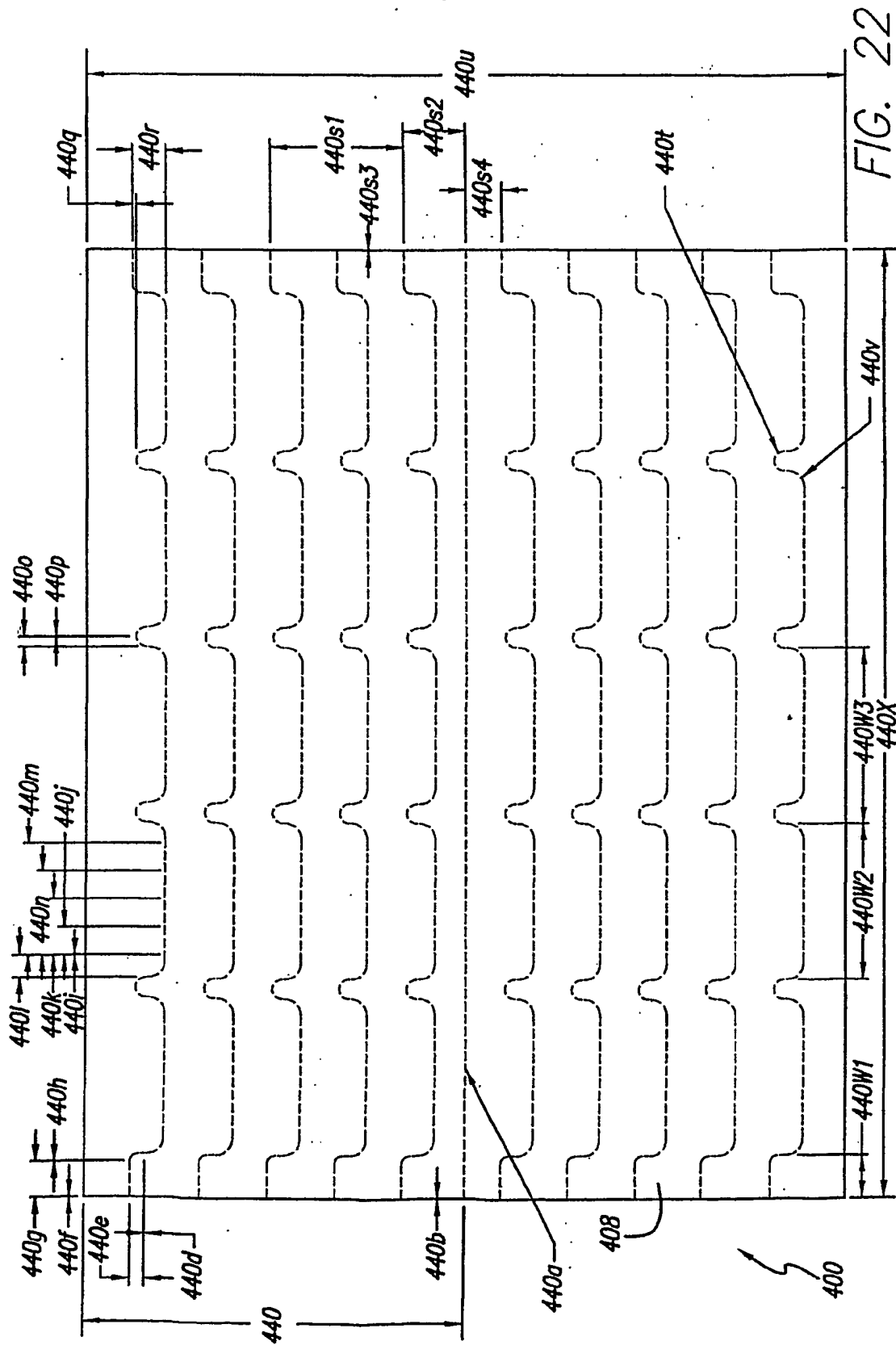


FIG. 20



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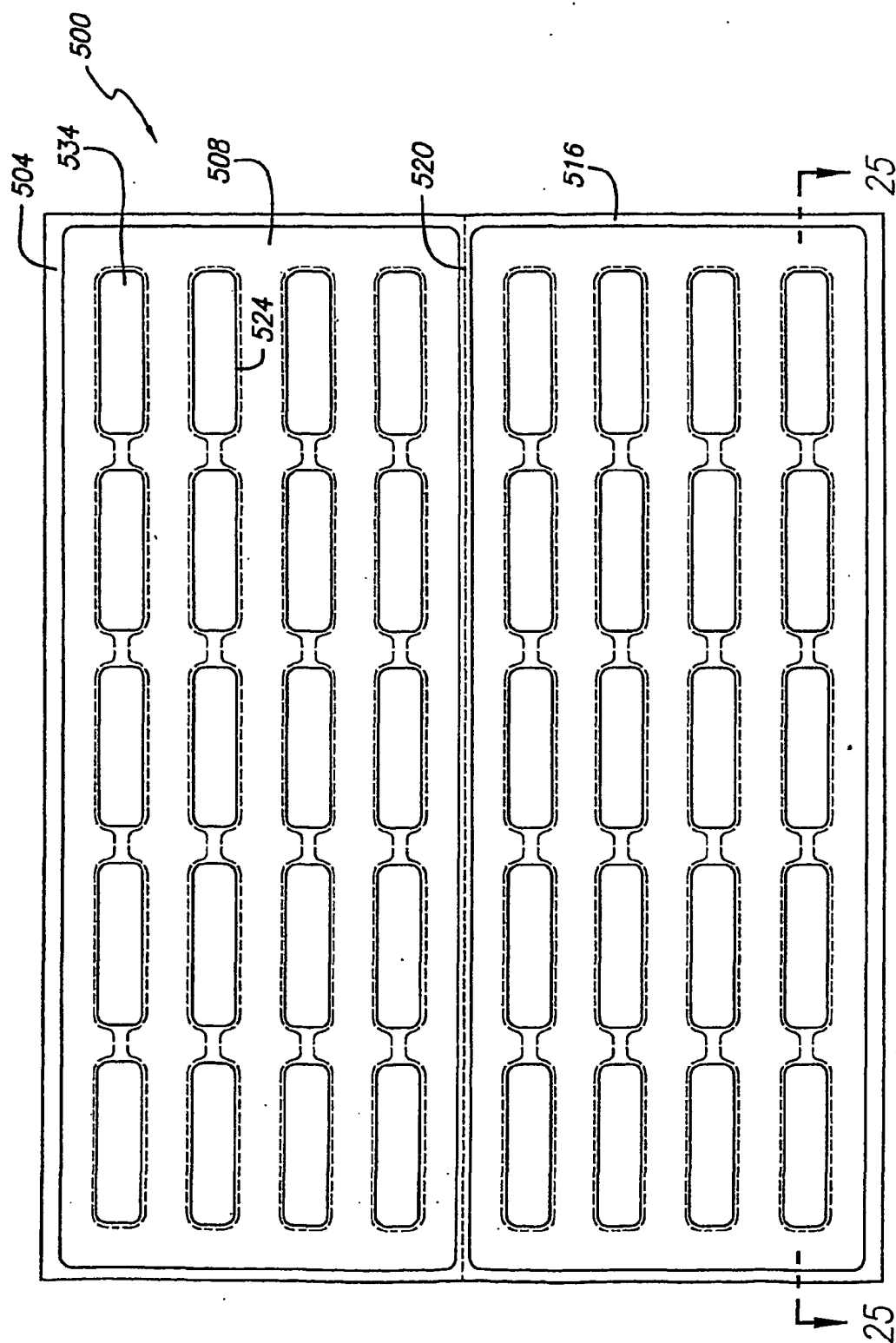


FIG. 23

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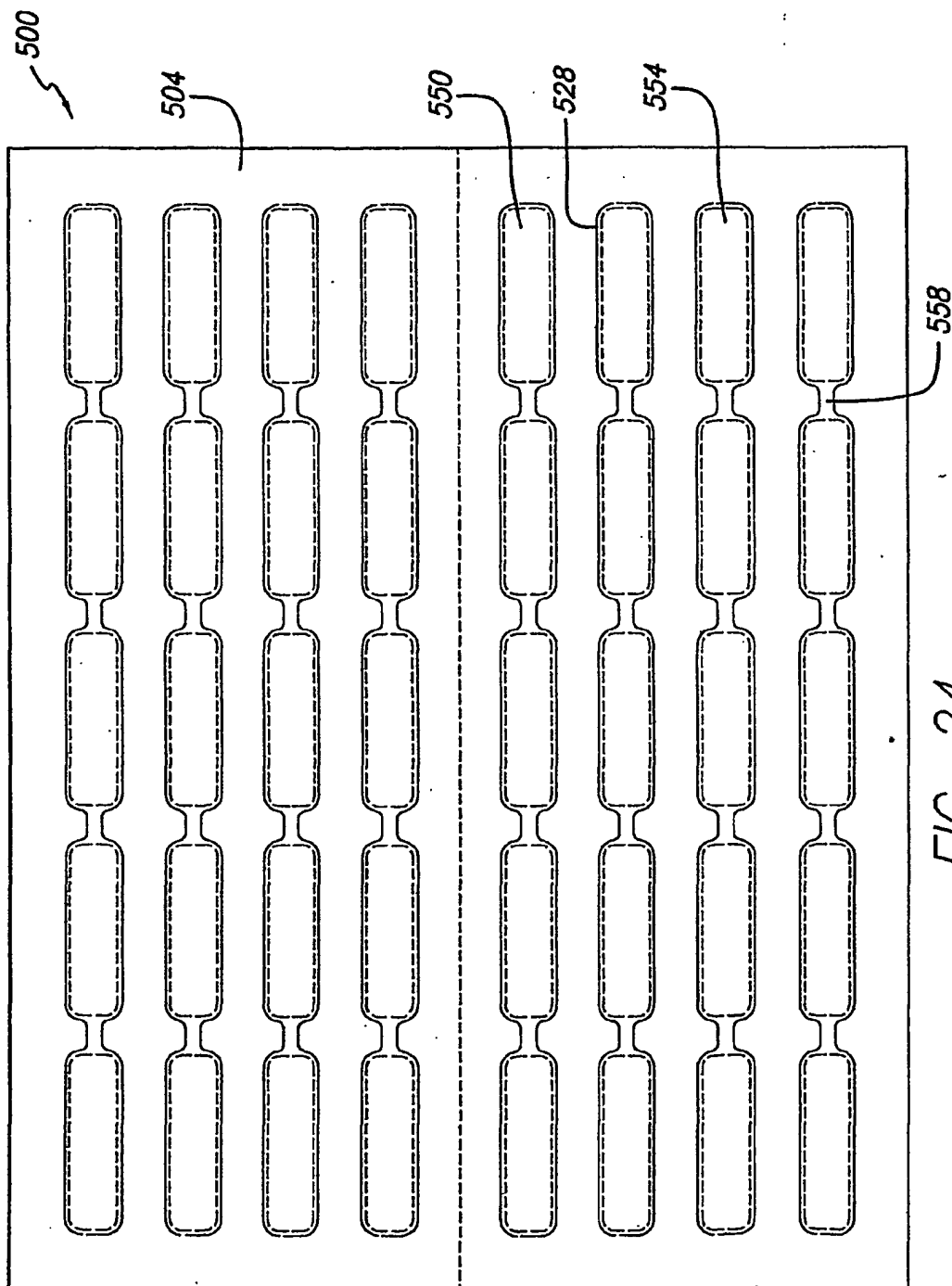


FIG. 24

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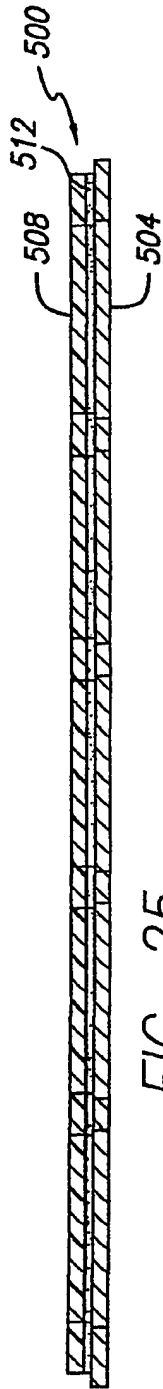


FIG. 25

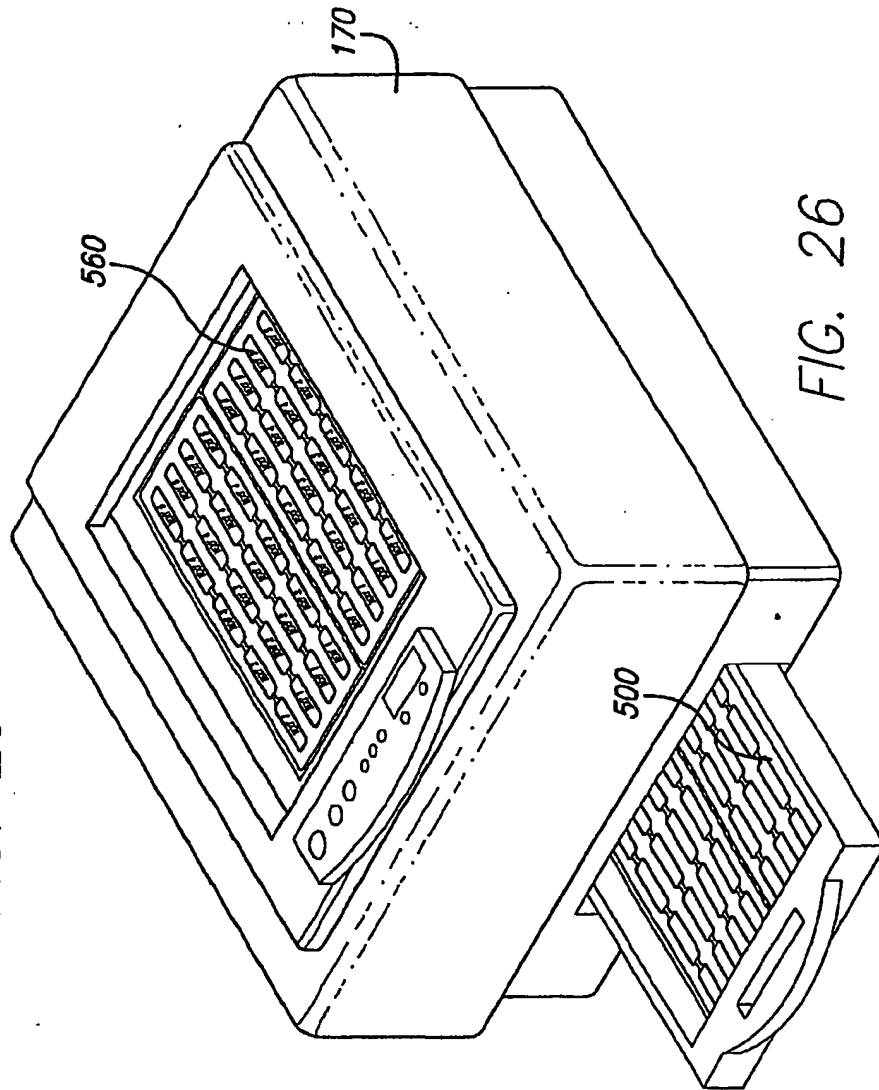


FIG. 26

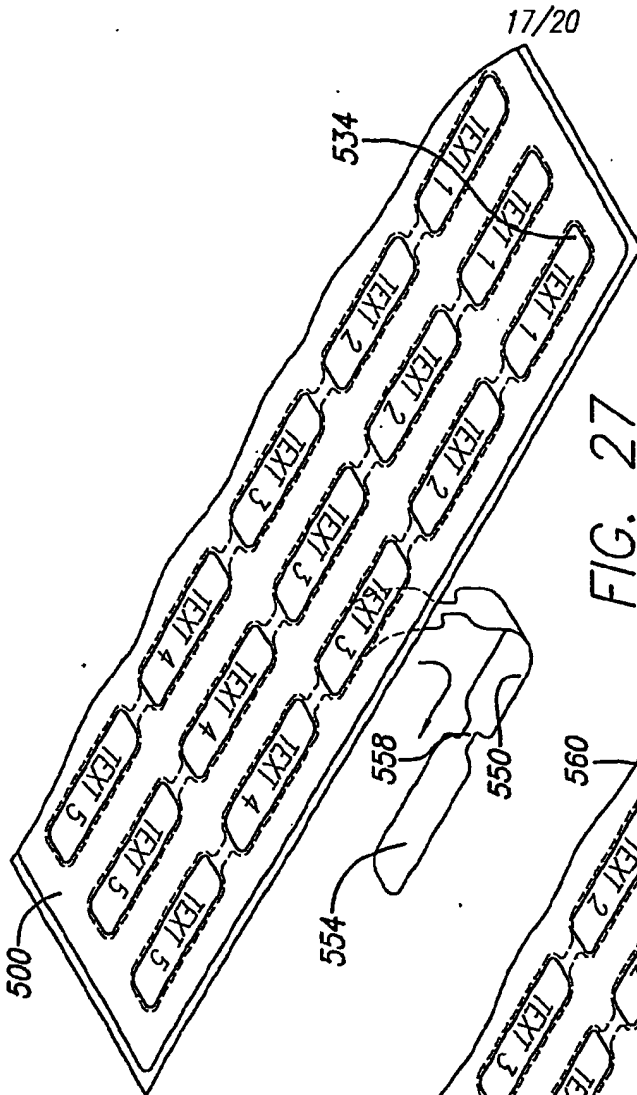


FIG. 27

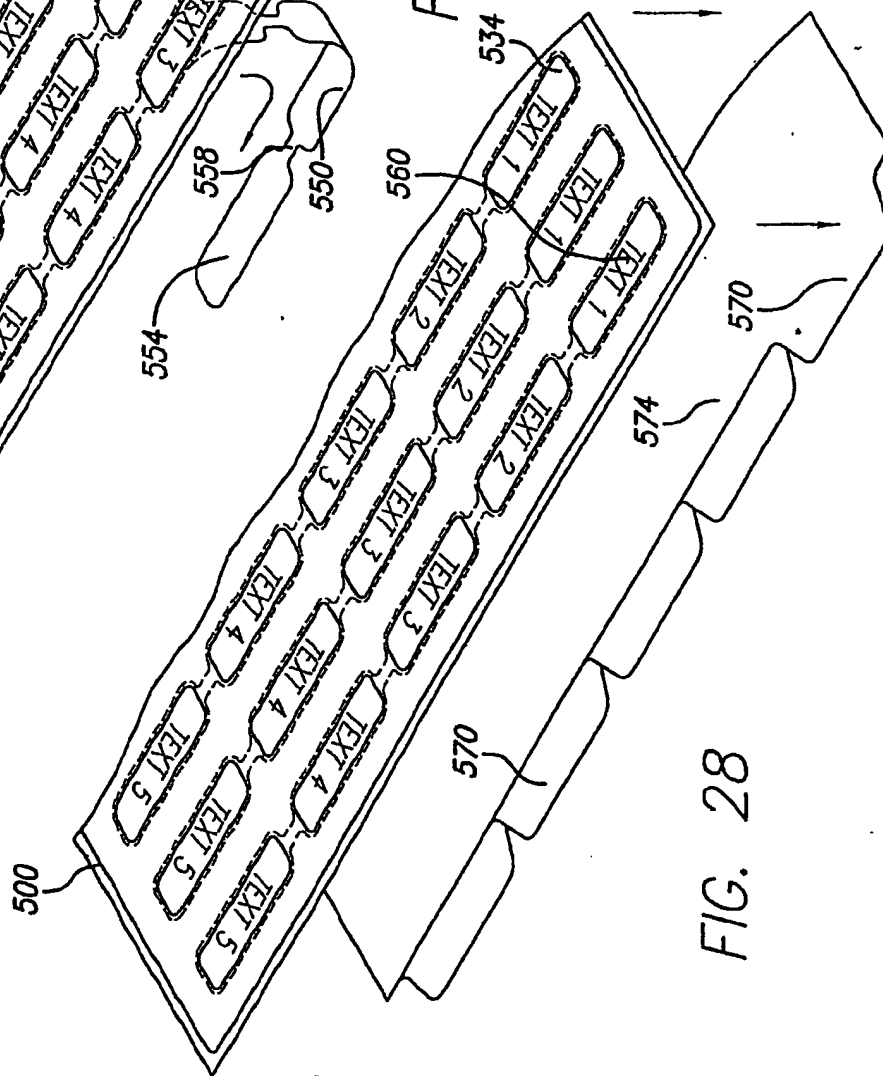
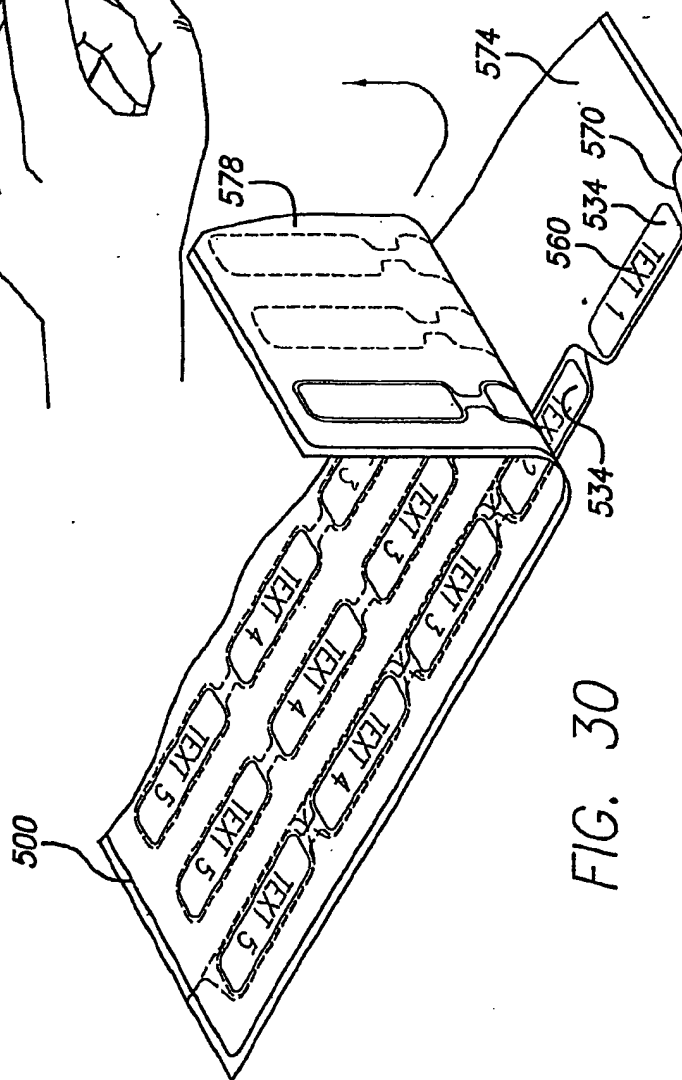
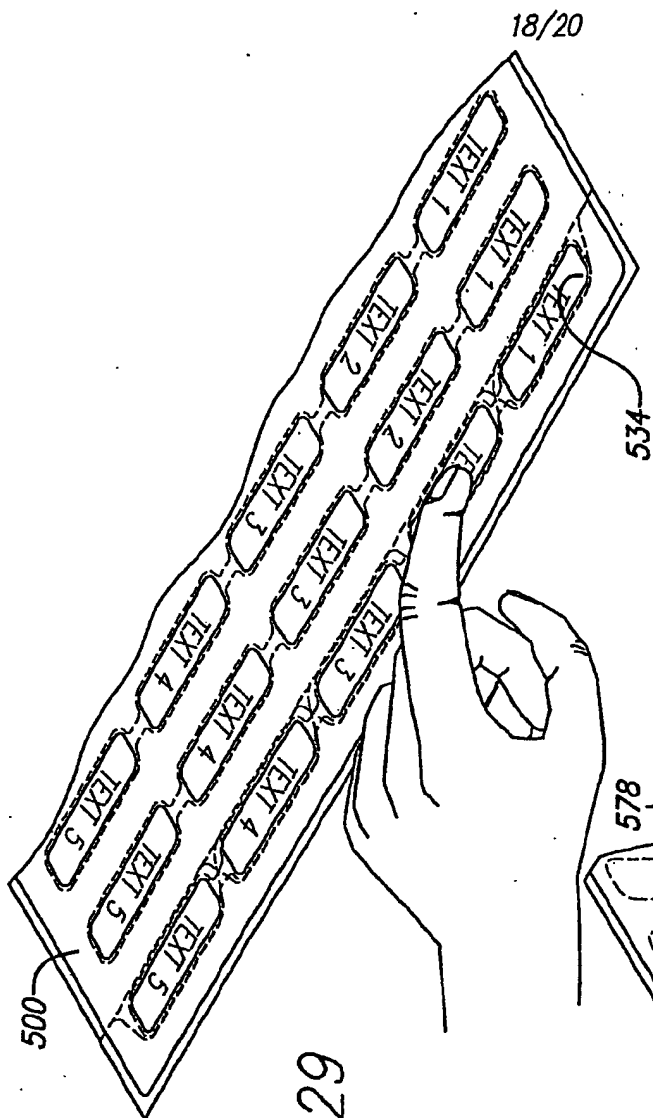


FIG. 28



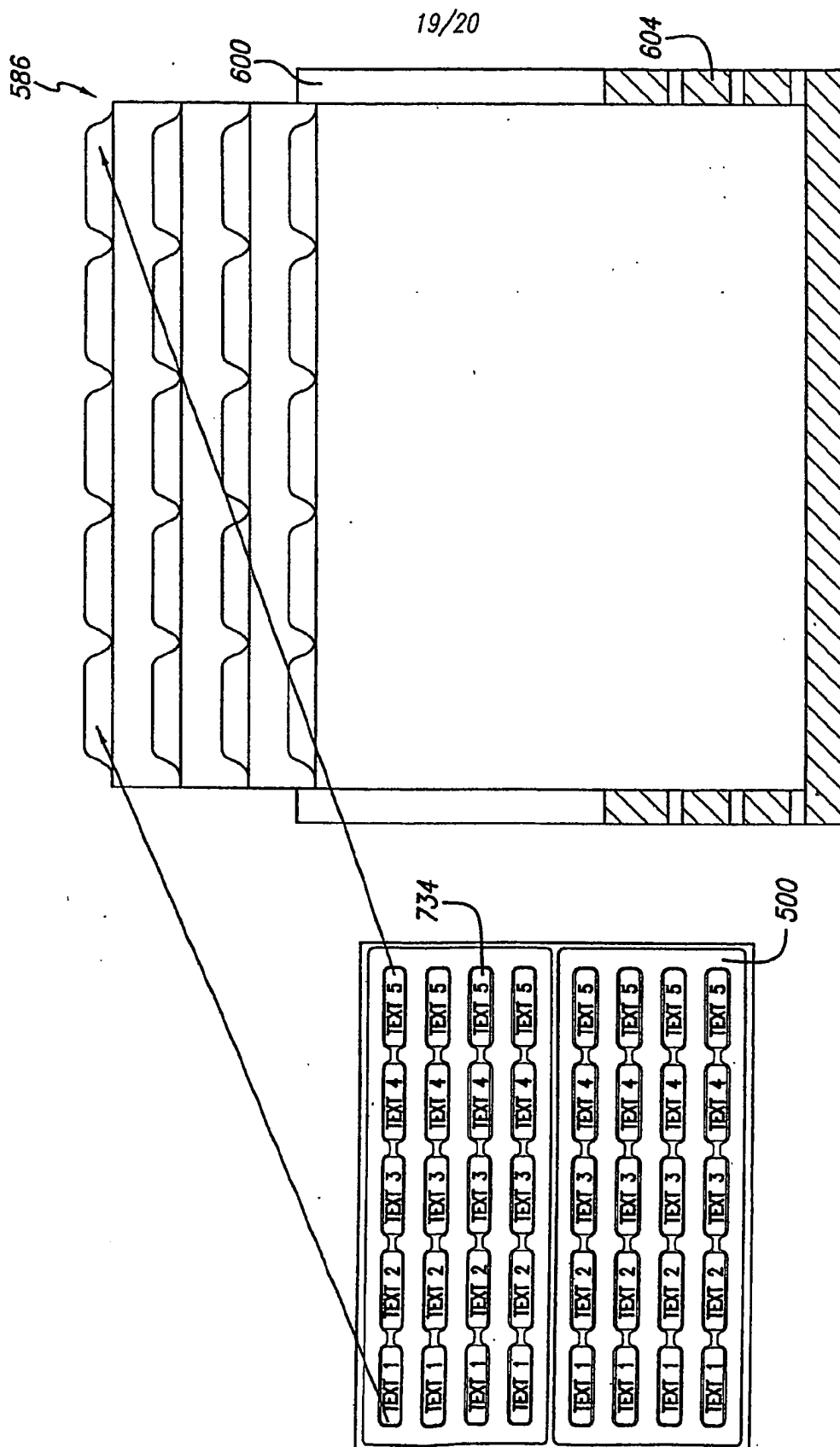
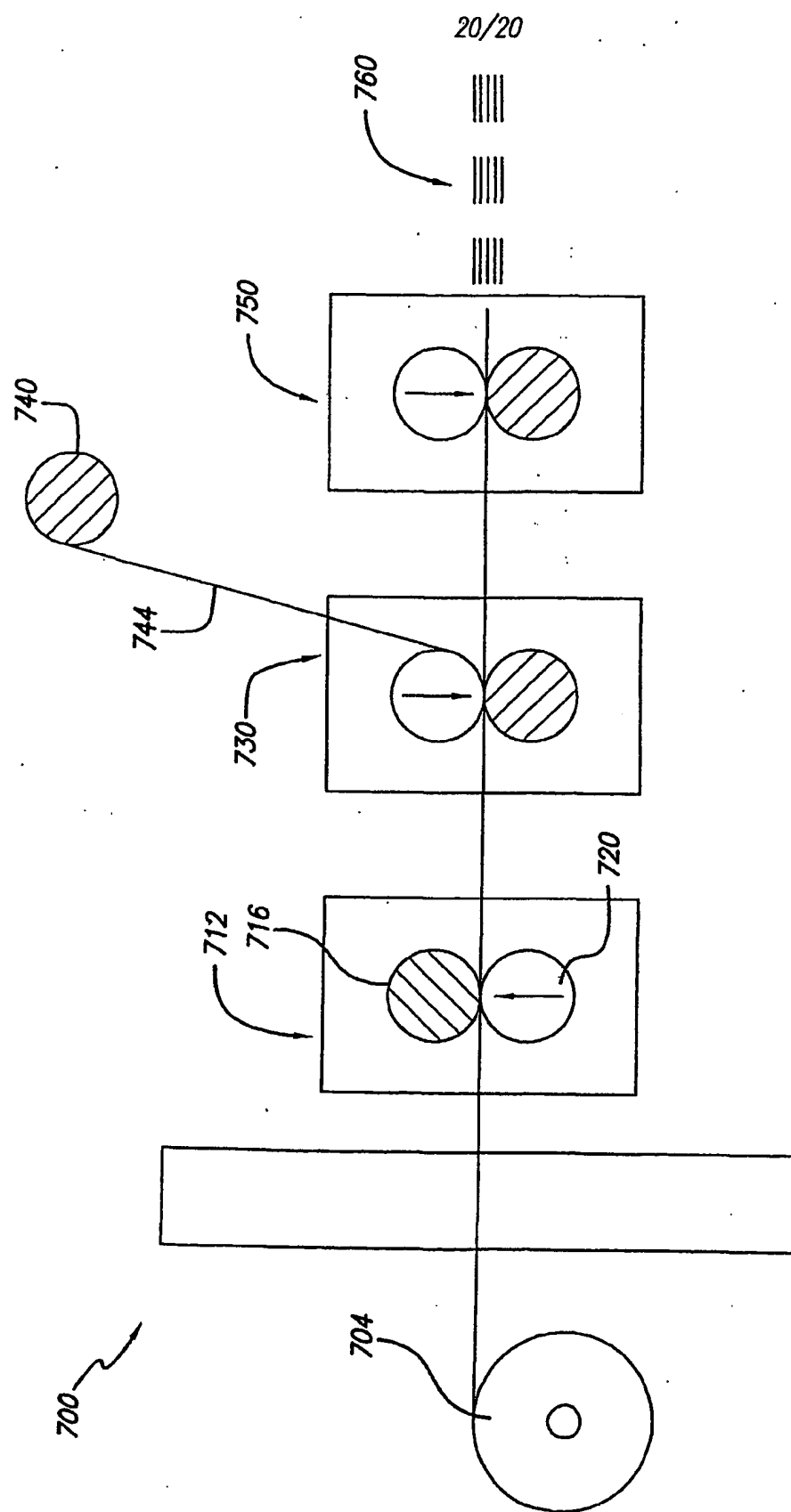


FIG. 31



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FIG. 32

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US01/18414

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(7) : B32B 7/06, 7/12; B65C 1/00, 7/00

US CL : 428/41.8, 42.2, 42.3; 156/249, 277, DIG 1, DIG 23

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S. : 428/41.8, 42.2, 42.3; 156/247, 249, 277, 289, DIG 1, DIG 2, DIG 23

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

EAST

search terms: label, handle, tab, folder, divider

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 4,478,666 A (OGDEN) 23 October 1984, col. 9, line 39 - col. 14, line 15.	1-6, 8-10, 12-17, 19, 21-23, 88-94, 96-99
Y		18, 20
X	US 5,484,168 A (CHIGOT) 16 January 1996, col. 3-4.	1-10, 13-17, 19, 21-23, 88-94, 96, 99
Y		18, 20

☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.
 ☐ See patent family annex.

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"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
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"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means	
"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed	

Date of the actual completion of the international search

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US01/16414

C (Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 5,227,209 A (GARLAND) 13 July 1993, col. 5, line 35 - col. 7, line 52.	1-4, 8-10, 13-17, 19, 21-23, 88-95, 99
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Y		18
X	US 5,182,152 A (ERICSON) 26 January 1993, col. 7, lines 20-68.	24-29, 32-35, 37-41, 44-47, 51-54, 60-63, 65-75, 78, 79, 85, 87, 119
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A	US 4,584,219 A (BAARTMANS) 22 April 1986.	
A	US 3,924,744 A (HEIMANN) 09 December 1975.	
A	US 5,462,783 A (ESSELMANN) 31 October 1995.	
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A	US 5,881,597 A (BROOKS) 16 March 1999.	
A	US 3,885,070 A (CHAPMAN) 20 May 1975.	